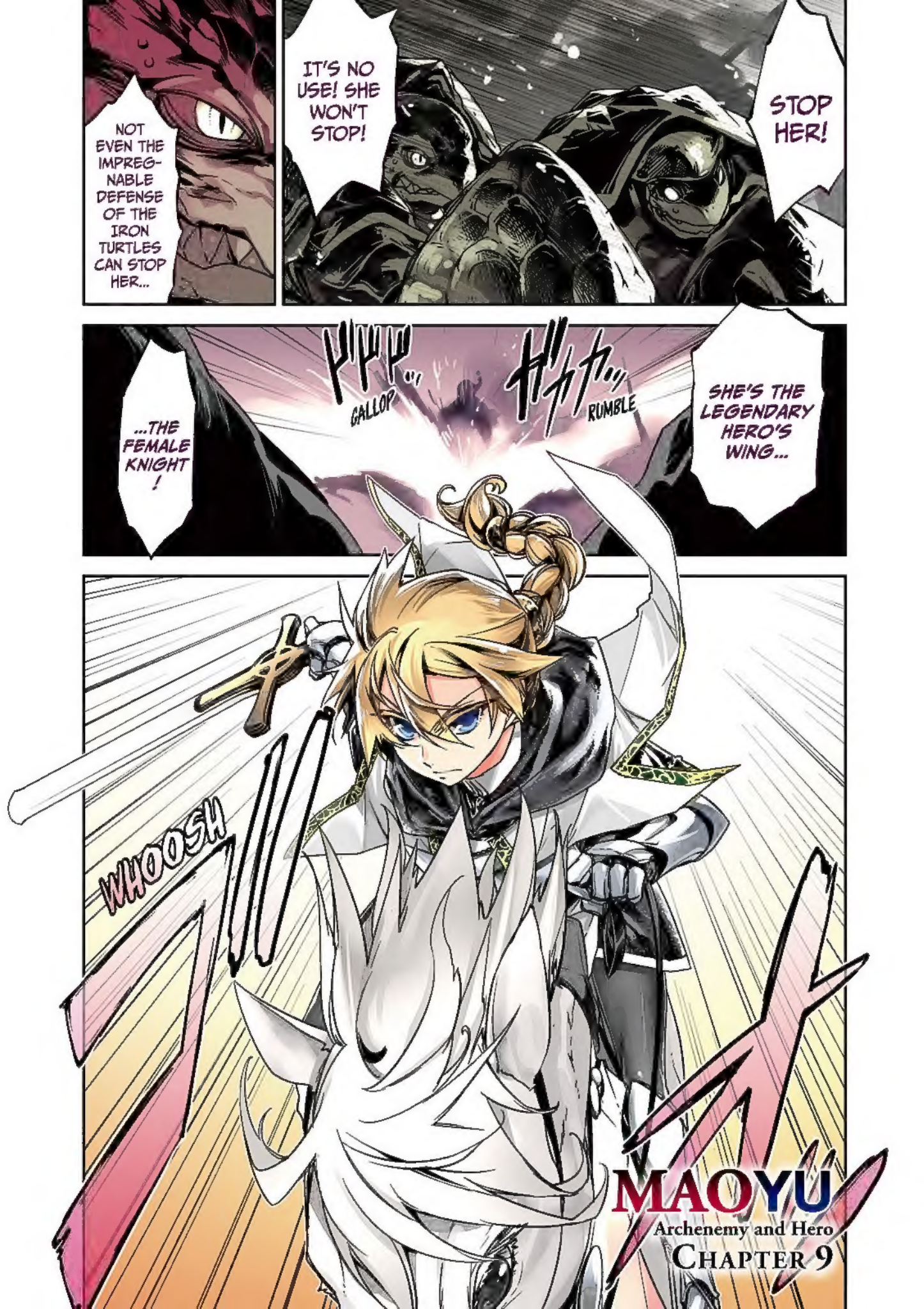
Art by
AKIRA ISHIDA

Original Work by
MAMARE TOUNO

Character Design by KEINOJOU MIZUTAMA and toi8


NOT EVEN THE IMPREG-NABLE DEFENSE OF THE IRON TURTLES CAN STOP HER...
IT'S NO USE! SHE WON'T STOP!
STOP HER!
...THE FEMALE KNIGHT!
GALLOP
RUMBLE
SHE'S THE LEGENDARY HERO'S WING...
WHOOSH
MAOYU
Archenemy and Hero
CHAPTER 9

Art by
AKIRA ISHIDA
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MAOYU
Archenemy and Hero
"Become mine, Hero" "I refuse!"

CHAPTER 9 Archenemy and Hero
That Is My Job

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CHAPTER 9 Archenemy and Hero

That Is My Job

MAOYU

VOLUME 3

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CHAPTER 9 Archenemy and Hero 001
That Is My Job

CHAPTER 10 Archenemy and Hero 049
Welcome Home, Hero!

CHAPTER 11 Archenemy and Hero 091
What Do You Think, My Darling?

CHAPTER 12 Archenemy and Hero 139
What Cannot be Defined by Profits and Losses

MAOYU

Archenemy and Hero

"Become mine, Hero" "I refuse!"

Volume 3

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COLUMN PAGE

Daisuke Takenouchi, Nagisa Hanakura (Recca-sha)

Masataka Nomura

Meanwhile, the Demon Queen's pseudonym the Crimson Scholar spreads far, along with the fruits of her technological innovations.

She receives a visit from the Merchant Alliance's Young Merchant. The Demon Queen explains from a big-picture perspective how a Merchant should be, and she successfully creates a cooperative partnership between them.

As the Hero and Demon Queen are making steady progress, something major is happening in the world. The allied forces of the Southern Kingdoms begin invading Aurora Island in the Antarctic Sea in order to reclaim the island from the demons. However, a tactical mistake causes the allied forces to fail horribly, and the Winter King dies in battle. Swearing revenge, his son declares himself the Lonely Winter King and takes the throne, and with the Female Knight as supreme commander of his forces, he pledges to invade Aurora Island once more. Learning from the previous battle, they try to invade by crossing over to the island using a bridge constructed from ice floes, but when they have difficulties acquiring the necessary materials, they find themselves at an impasse. However, the situation is resolved by the arrival of the Demon Queen, and the Second Landing Operation to Recover Aurora Island begins!

"Become mine, Hero!"

The "Hero" enters the Demon Queen's castle alone to put an end to the gruesome battle between humans and demons. However, when the Hero learns the truth about the world, including the benefits of the war, he begins working with the Demon Queen toward finding the "unseen other side of the hill."

Later, the Demon Queen and Hero take up residence in the lonely town of Overwinter Village where they begin working on agricultural reform and education. However, when the Hero learns from the Female Knight that their former traveling companion, the "Female Magician," traveled to the Spirit World, the Hero decides to search for her. Understanding Hero's intentions, the Demon Queen makes him the Black Knight working directly for her, and with instructions to enforce discipline among the now relaxed demons, she sends him off.

TO DO THAT, I NEED THE ENTIRE VILLAGE'S HELP.
WE MUST FIRST TEACH THOSE CLOSE TO US HOW WONDERFUL THIS IS IN ORDER FOR IT TO SPREAD.
IF WE DON'T THINK OF WAYS FOR EVERYONE TO LIVE PLENTIFUL LIVES WITHOUT HUNGER, THIS WON'T LAST LONG.
WHILE WE DO NEED MONEY, I DON'T INTEND TO KEEP THEM ALL TO MYSELF.

Though the Hero arrives in the Spirit World, he is unable to find the Female Magician, and he promises to free Gateway City, sacred ground of the demons, from the control of humans in order to quell the dissatisfaction of Archduke Fire Dragon who the Hero finds himself fighting while trying to bring peace and security to the Spirit World.

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MAOYU CHARACTER DESCRIPTIONS

Lectures on Archenemy and Hero
Character Profile

THE DEMON QUEEN

Monarch of the demons. Searching for a world she has not yet seen, she intends to truly end the war by using her vast knowledge as a weapon. Currently she calls herself the Crimson Scholar and lives in Overwinter Village.

THE HERO

The young man convinced to work with the Demon Queen to end the war. He possesses exceptional combat strength. He operates in the Spirit World as the Demon Queen's Black Knight.

THE CHIEF MAID

Has been caring for the Demon Queen since she was a child. She is related to the Demon Queen and devotes herself daily to the pursuit of the "Way of the Maid."

THE FEMALE KNIGHT

A knight attached to the Lakeside Convent. Though she was assisting the Demon Queen with her agricultural reformation, she now leads the Aurora Island Reclamation Operation as its supreme commander.

THE LONELY WINTER KING

King of the Winter Kingdom. Succeeding his father who died in battle, he decides to execute the Second Landing Operation to Recover Aurora Island.

THE YOUNG MERCHANT

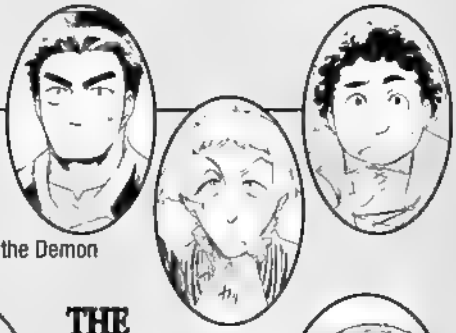
A young merchant of the Alliance. He falls in love with the Demon Queen's resourcefulness and wit during their negotiation regarding the compass and seeks to marry her.

THE BUTLER

A butler serving the Lonely Winter King in the Winter Kingdom. An old warrior who formerly traveled with the Hero and Female Knight as an archer.

THE 3 SONS

The sons of a noble, soldier, and merchant. Currently in training under the Demon Queen.



THE OLDER MAID SISTER

A former serf. Under the guidance of the Chief Maid, she works with her sister as a maid at the Demon Queen's mansion.

THE YOUNGER MAID SISTER

A girl working with her older sister at the Demon Queen's mansion. Though she is quick to cry, she is surprisingly strong at the core.

THE ANTARCTIC GENERAL

Leader of the demons occupying Aurora Island. Uses his giant tusks and arms as weapons in battle.

ROAR
PANT
PANT
PANT
WHAT IS IT?
I...
I...
-AAAH
YEAH. SHE'S EVEN STRONGER THAN THEY SAY.
AAAH
THAT'S INCREDIBLE. THE FEMALE KNIGHT...
...HAS ALREADY CUT THROUGH THAT FAR.
VOLUNTEER ARMY, FOURTH COMPANY ...
...FORWARD!
YAAAH!
....
ROAR
IT'S OUR TURN.
COME ON!
I WAS AFRAID TO FIGHT...
...BUT SEEING THE FEMALE KNIGHT...
AAAH
YEAH.
IT GIVES US COURAGE!

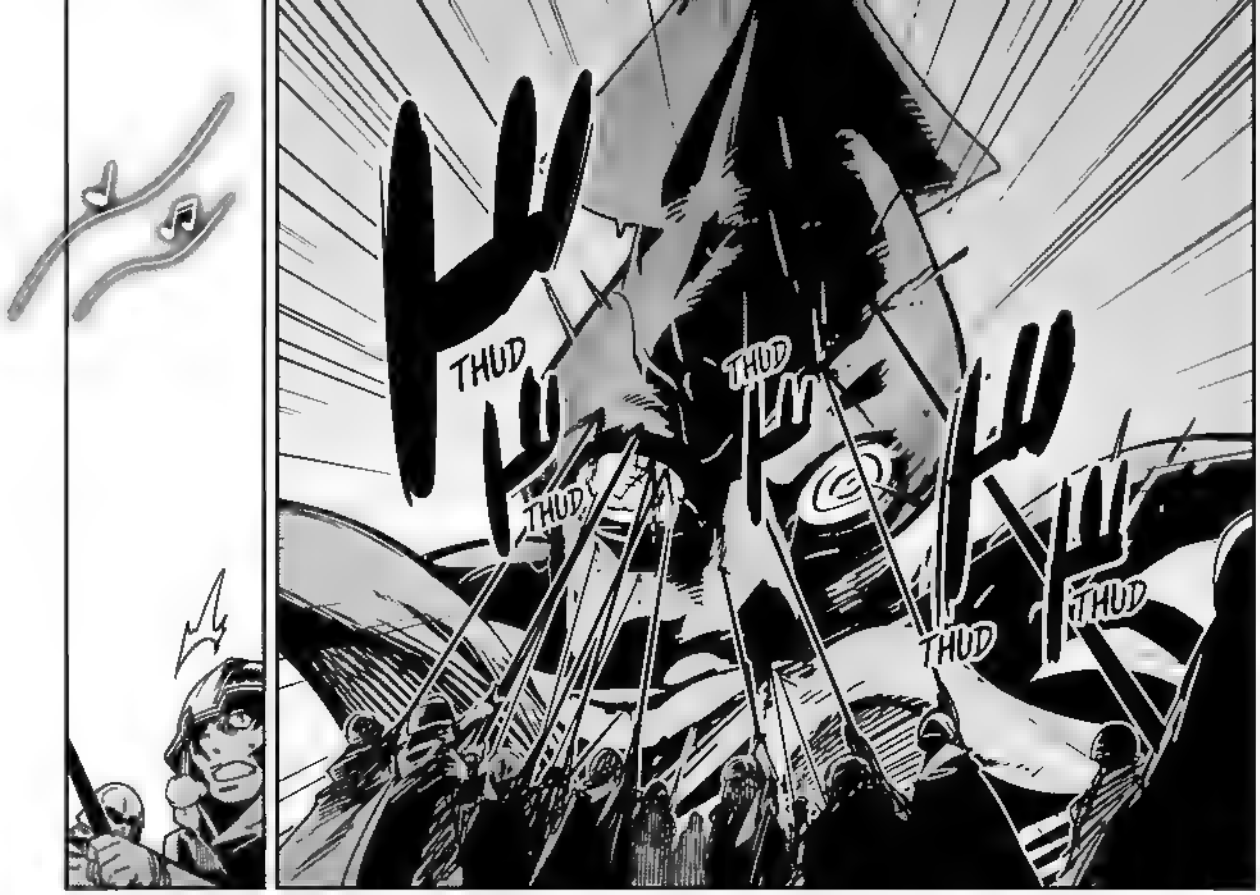
ROAR
ROAR
BOOM
RUMBLE
ゴォオオ
オォオ…
RUSTLE
STAB
STAB
STAB
DASH
DASH
DASH
WHOOSH
ズズ…
WHOOSH
ズズ
WHOOSH
ズズ
AAH!
DASH

ROAR
WHOOSH
ズーン
AAAH!
DASH

ROAR
BOOM
RUMBLE
STAB
STAB
RUSTLE
WHOOSH
DASH
DASH
DASH
STAB
WHOOSH

AD-VANCE !
DASH
DASH
DASH
DASH
AD-VANCE !
RUMBLE
SPLASH

AAAH
YAAARGH
THUD
THUD
THUD
THUD
HELP
ME!
SKWEEZE
ARGH!
AH
GRAB
WHOOSH
WHOOSH
WHOOSH
WHOOSH
SHUNK
SHUNK
KLANK
BANG
VOLUNTEER ARMY SPEARMEN, SECOND COMPANY...
...ADVANCE!
ALL RIGHT!
CROSSBOWMEN, FIRE ANOTHER ROUND!
YAAAH


THUD
THUD
THUD
THUD
THUD
THUD

RUSTLE-
CROSS-BOW-MEN!
THE DEMON CONTROL-LING THE GIANT DEMON IS THERE!
STEP
IT'S FROM THE SOUTH-WEST-ERN SEA!
THE SOUND OF A FLUTE!

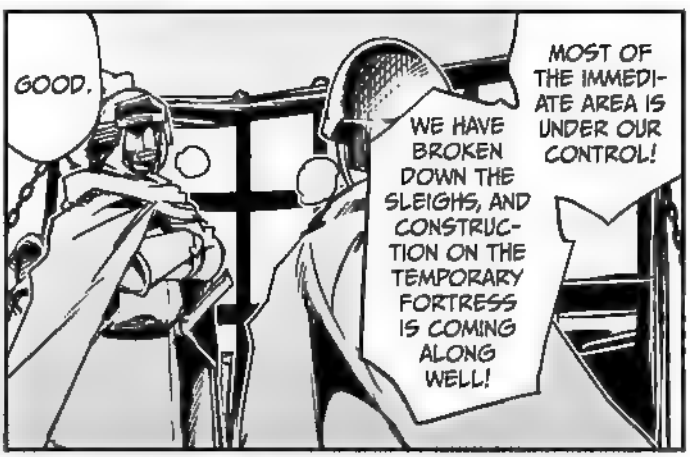
YAAAH
NOW!
STAB THE THING!
THE SOUND STOPPED, AND IT'S WEAKEN-ING!
WHOOSH
WHOOSH

YAAAH!
KLANG
HEAVY INFANTRY, FOURTH COMPANY...
...PUSH THEM AWAY!
LEFT WING, RETREAT!
THERE ARE APPROXIMATELY A THOUSAND ENEMY DEMONS!
WHOOSH
FOR THE KINGDOM!
DO NOT RETREAT!
IF WE DEFEND THIS POSITION WITH OUR LIVES, REINFORCEMENTS WILL COME!
ROAR
WE WILL BRING VICTORY FOR THE FEMALE KNIGHT GENERAL!
FOR THE LONELY WINTER KING!
AAAH

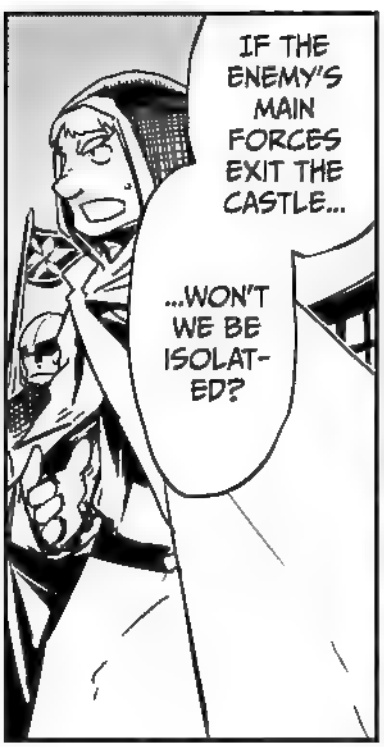
YAAAH
RUMBLE
CHARGE!
RUSTLE
BOOM

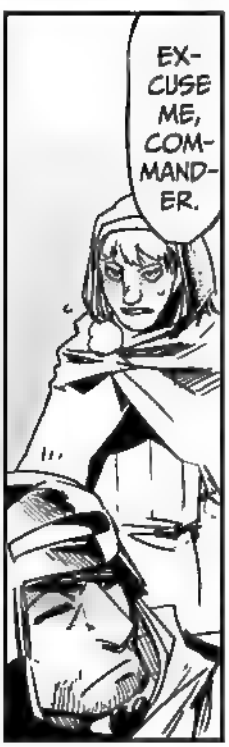
WHOOSH

YES, SIR!
KEEP A LOOKOUT OVER THE AREA AND AURORA FORTRESS.
KLANK


GOOD.
WE HAVE BROKEN DOWN THE SLEIGHS, AND CONSTRUCTION ON THE TEMPORARY FORTRESS IS COMING ALONG WELL!
MOST OF THE IMMEDIATE AREA IS UNDER OUR CONTROL!

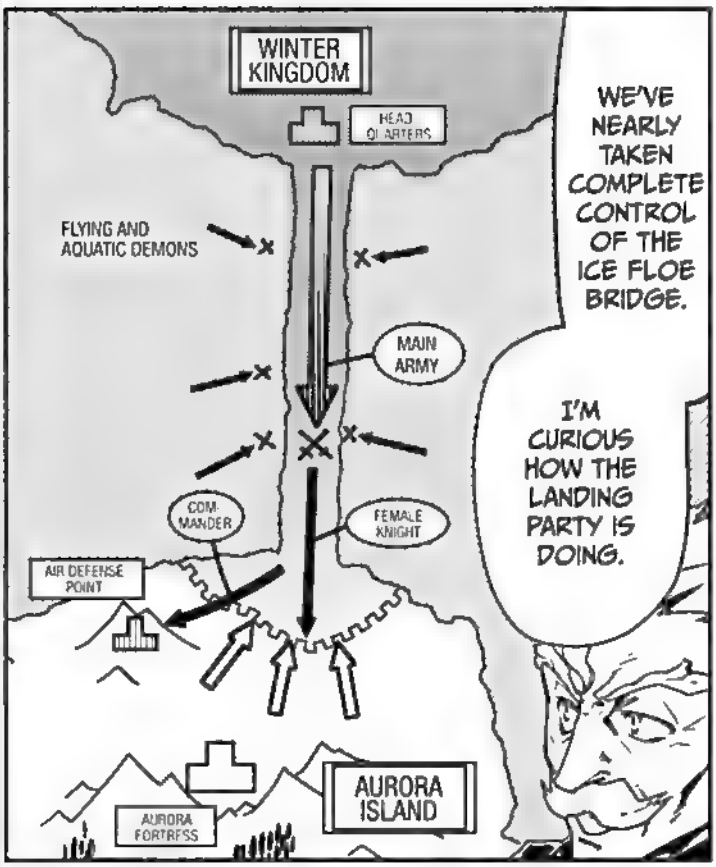
IT'S ALL RIGHT.
HAVE FAITH IN YOUR ALLIES.
HAVE FAITH IN THE LADY GENERAL.


IF THE ENEMY'S MAIN FORCES EXIT THE CASTLE...
...WON'T WE BE ISOLATED?


EXCUSE ME, COMMANDER.

SECOND LANDING OPERATION TO RECOVER AURORA ISLAND SIMPLE HEADQUARTERS
A MESSAGE!
A MESSAGE!

THAT'S NEARLY ALL THE ONES THAT WERE SPOTTED.
A GIANT DEMON HAS BEEN DEFEATED!
THAT'S THE ELEVENTH ONE!


WINTER KINGDOM
HEAD QUARTERS
FLYING AND AQUATIC DEMONS
MAIN ARMY
COMMANDER
FEMALE KNIGHT
AIR DEFENSE POINT
AURORA FORTRESS
AURORA ISLAND
WE'VE NEARLY TAKEN COMPLETE CONTROL OF THE ICE FLOE BRIDGE.
I'M CURIOUS HOW THE LANDING PARTY IS DOING.

WE HAVE BROUGHT THE RESISTANCE FORCES IN THE MOUNTAINS UNDER CONTROL AND ARE OCCUPYING THE AREA.
WE HAVE SECURED THE BEACH-HEAD.
WE HAVE TAKEN CONTROL OVER THE LANDING POINT.
HE SAVED ME NUMER-OUS TIMES.
WIPE OFF HIS SWEAT.
SNORT
ALSO, I NEED A NEW HORSE.
RUSTLE
ESTABLISH A COMMU-NICATION SYSTEM!
SEND A MES-SEN-GER!
YES, SIR!
I'M NOT SURPRISED.
STEP
I DIDN'T EXPECT TO ACHIEVE SUCH GREAT RESULTS!
IT'S A HUGE SUC-CESS!
FIVE HUN-DRED ...
I SUP-POSE.
WE'VE SUFFERED ABOUT 500 LOSSES.
HAVE A TOWEL
THIS IS TURN-ING OUT WELL.

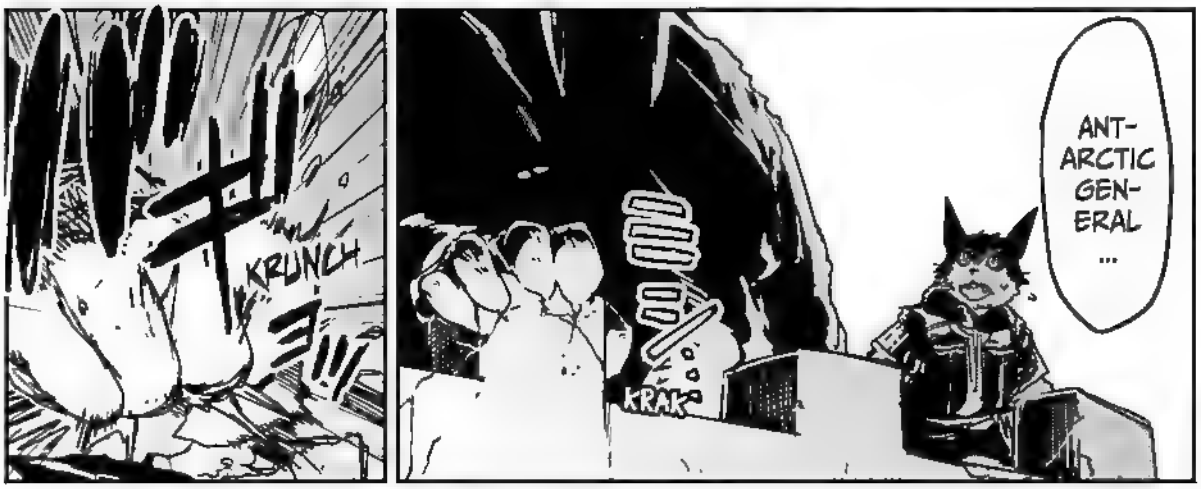
THE SCHOL-AR.
RUSTLE
THAT WAS AN IMPRESSIVE DISPLAY OF LEADERSHIP.
I DIDN'T THINK YOU WOULD BE SO SUCCESSFUL AFTER ABAN-DONING YOUR SURPRISE ATTACK.
BUT THAT STOPS HERE.
I SUP-POSE.
AURORA ISLAND HAS MANY NATURAL CAVES, AND THE MOUNTAIN CASTLE IS A SECURE STRONG-HOLD.
IF THE POWERFUL ANTARCTIC GENERAL IS THERE, THEY'LL PROBABLY TRY TO HOLD THE CASTLE.

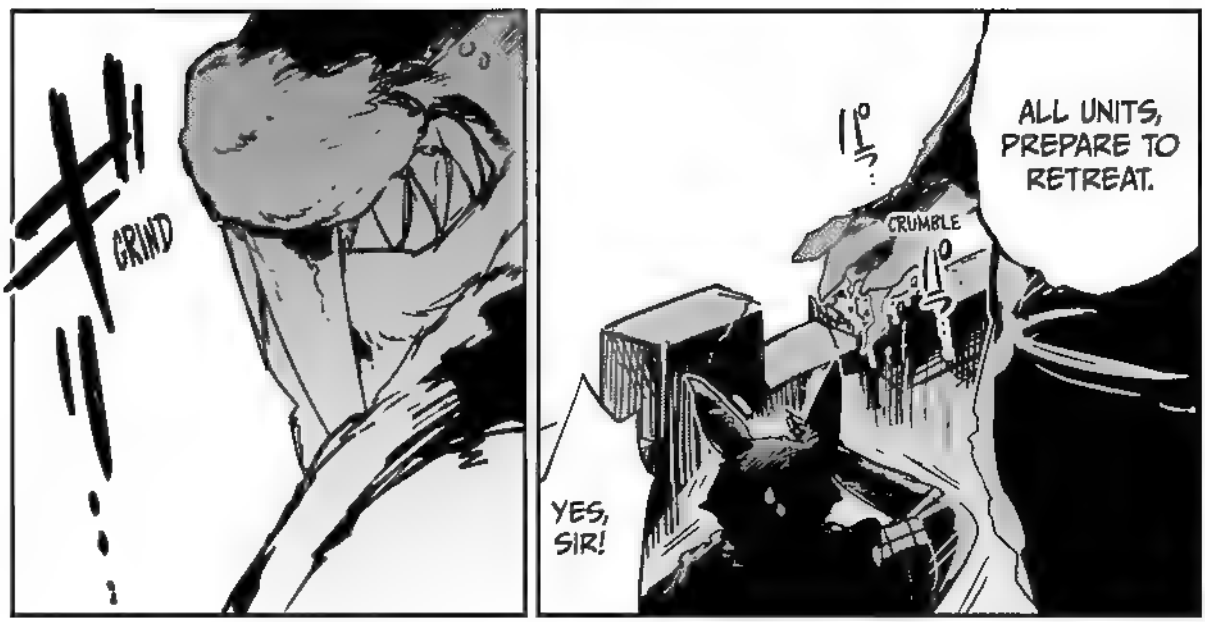
THERE ARE TWO WAYS TO SIEGE A CASTLE.
THE FIRST IS BRUTE FORCE ...
...BUT IT WILL BECOME A FIERCE WAR OF ATTRITION.
THOUGH WE TRAINED THEM, OUR SOLDIERS HAVE A RANGE OF EXPERIENCE, MAKING ME FEEL UNEASY ABOUT A DRAWN OUT BATTLE.
OUR OTHER OPTION IS TO ENCIRCLE THE CASTLE.
IT WON'T BE EASY TO SURROUND THE CASTLE IN THE FREEZING COLD...
...BUT THE DEMONS' GUERRILLA TACTICS OF DIVING INTO THE WATER AND MELTING INTO THE DARKNESS...
...WOULD POSE A THREAT TO THE MINDS OF THE SOLDIERS.
EITHER WAY, IT WILL BECOME A WAR OF NERVES.
THIS ISN'T AN EASY SITUATION.
THE TRUE BATTLE BEGINS NOW.

THE ANTARCTIC GENERAL MUST KNOW THAT AS WELL.
HE MUST BE RIDING OUT THIS SITUATION EXPECTING HIS FORCES TO RALLY.
SCHOLAR, DO YOU HAVE A PLAN TO DEAL WITH THIS SITUATION?
YES.
I'D LIKE TO KNOW WHY...
...YOU NEEDED SO MUCH TIME WE HAD TO ABANDON OUR PLAN TO TAKE THE CASTLE...
...IN A SURPRISE ATTACK.
IT'S NOT MUCH OF A PLAN.
YOU'LL UNDERSTAND SOON ENOUGH.

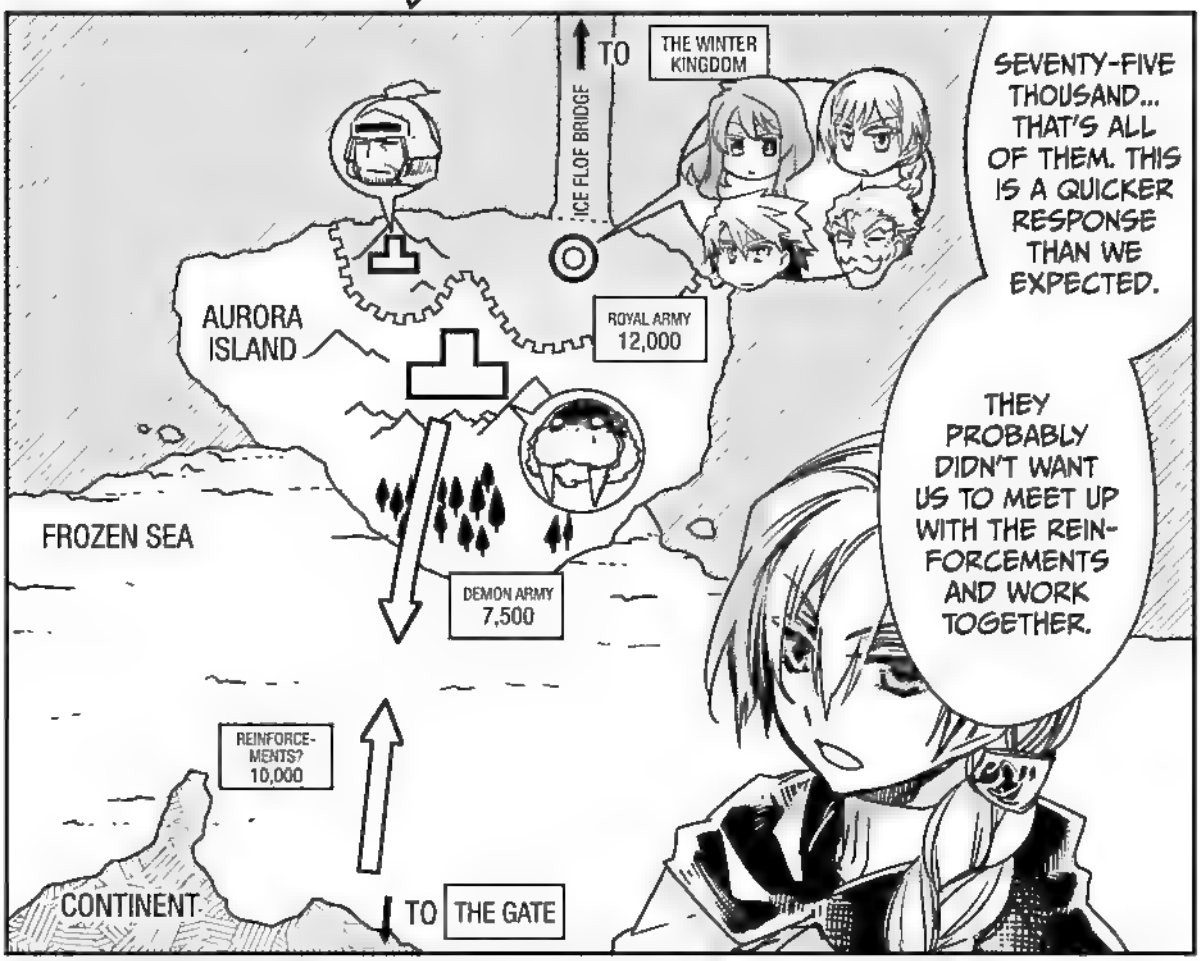
I HAVE A MES-SAGE!
MES-SAGE!
RUSTLE
DASSH
FORCES HAVE EMERGED SOUTH OF AURORA ISLAND IN THE DIRECTION OF THE SPIRIT WORLD CONTINENT!
THEY NUMBER OVER 10,000!
THEY ...
THEY ...
THEY'RE ALLIES!
IT'S NOT A TRICK.
THEY'RE REIN-FORCE-MENTS.
THE ANTARCTIC GENERAL WON'T SURRENDER TO THOSE NUMBERS...
...BUT HE WILL RUN.

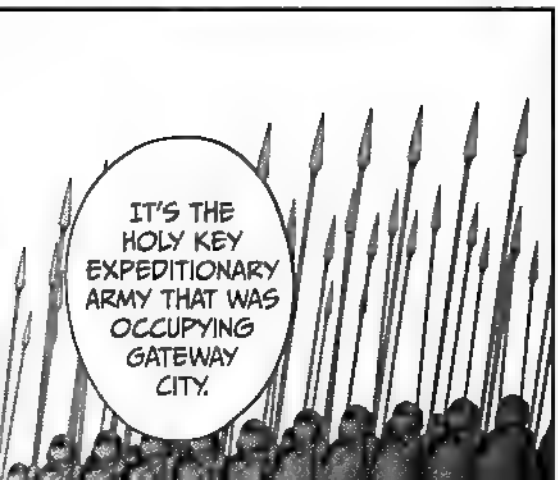
STEP
STEP
STEP
STEP


KRUNCH
KRAK
ANT-ARCTIC GEN-ERAL ...


GRIND
CRUMBLE
ALL UNITS, PREPARE TO RETREAT.
YES, SIR!

SECOND LANDING OPERATION TO RECOVER AURORA ISLAND BEACHHEAD TENT
DASSH
THE DEMONS HAVE LEFT THE AURORA ISLAND FORTRESS!
THERE ARE APPROXIMATELY 7,500 OF THEM!
RUSTLE
THEY'RE MARCHING RAPIDLY TOWARD THE MYSTERIOUS REINFORCEMENTS THROUGH THE FROST COVERED TREES!


TO
THE WINTER KINGDOM
ICE FLOE BRIDGE
AURORA ISLAND
ROYAL ARMY 12,000
FROZEN SEA
DEMON ARMY 7,500
REINFORCEMENTS? 10,000
CONTINENT
TO
THE GATE
SEVENTY-FIVE THOUSAND... THAT'S ALL OF THEM. THIS IS A QUICKER RESPONSE THAN WE EXPECTED.
THEY PROBABLY DIDN'T WANT US TO MEET UP WITH THE REINFORCEMENTS AND WORK TOGETHER.


IT'S THE HOLY KEY EXPEDITIONARY ARMY THAT WAS OCCUPYING GATEWAY CITY.

...HUMAN ARMY THAT COULD COME FROM BEYOND THE GATE.
THERE'S ONLY ONE...
BUT WHO ARE THOSE REINFORCEMENTS?

THE HOLY KEY EXPEDITIONARY ARMY HAS THE BEST TRAINING AND EQUIPMENT IN ALL THE HUMAN WORLD.
THEY ALSO HAVE THE ADVANTAGE OF NUMBERS. I DON'T SEE ANY WAY THEY CAN LOSE.
WHAT WILL HAPPEN?
SEVENTY-FIVE THOUSAND DEMONS AND 10,000 REINFORCEMENTS.
WHOOSH
I DON'T KNOW ABOUT THAT.
I GOT THEM LOST AND SLOWED THEM DOWN SO THEY'D ARRIVE AT THE RIGHT TIME.
THEY'RE PRETTY TIRED.
STEP
HERO!
YOU'RE ALIVE?
HA
CLATTER

THEY MAY BE THE EXPEDITION-ARY ARMY, BUT THEY'RE STILL PATHETIC.
SEE?
THE MYSTERIOUS REINFORCE-MENTS AND DEMON VANGUARD HAVE MADE CONTACT!
THE REINFORCE-MENTS' RANKS ARE LONG AND THIN IN FRONT!
THEY'RE BEING ROUTED!
RUSTLE
THEY'RE ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE ISLAND. IT WILL TAKE SOME TIME, BUT WE HAVE TO GO HELP THEM.

THEY'RE MOVING.
THEY MUST INTEND TO STRIKE FROM BEHIND AS WE RETREAT.
I WON'T LET THEM.

THANK YOU.
DO AS YOU PLEASE.
I'D LIKE TO GIVE THE HUMANS A SCARE TOO.
SMIRK
BY THE WAY, I THOUGHT I TOLD EVERYONE TO RETREAT.
WHOOSH
HA HA
HA HA HA
THE CAPTAIN SEEMS REALLY EXCITED
HE PROBABLY WANTS TO SHOW OFF TO THE LADY GENERAL
HA HA HA
STEP
STEP
OUR COMPANY WILL SPEARHEAD THE ATTACK!
HURRY!
STEP
SWISH
BOOM!

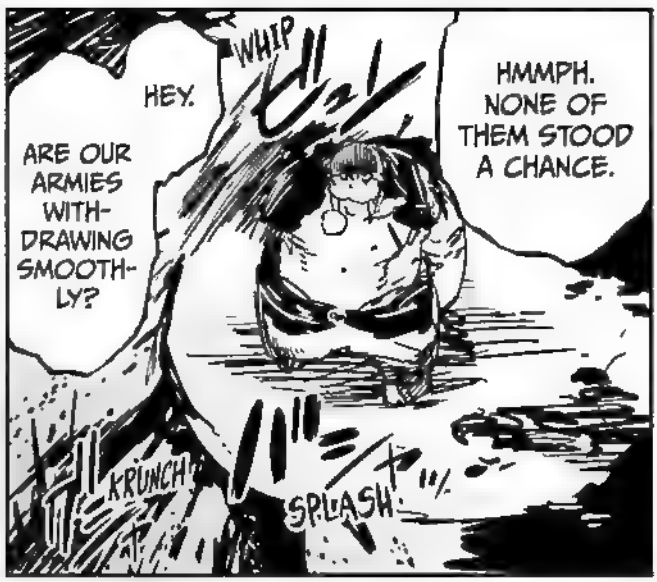
BOOM

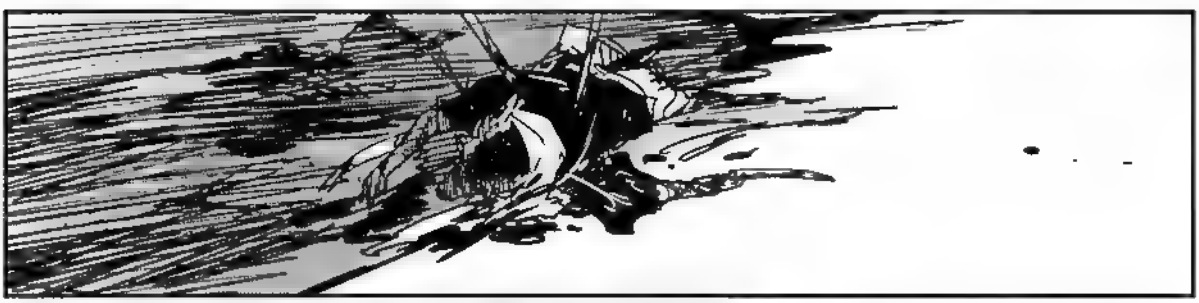
I AM THE ANTARCTIC GENERAL!
YOU WILL NOT TAKE A SINGLE STEP PAST THIS POINT!
AAAH
ORDER THEM TO RETREAT!
YES, MA'AM!
A MESSAGE!
AN ENTIRE COMPANY OF LIGHT INFANTRY WERE DESTROYED!
A DEMON CALLING HIMSELF THE ANTARCTIC GENERAL HAS APPEARED HERE!
RUSTLE

HE'S COME TO DIE A WARRIOR'S DEATH.
HE MAY BE OUR ENEMY, BUT IT'S ADMIRABLE.
GLANCE
HE IS JUST ANOTHER WARRIOR.
I HAVE NO CHOICE. I'LL TAKE CARE OF IT.
HERO.
THAT IS MY JOB.
IT'S A WARRIOR'S LAST REQUEST.
AS A GENERAL OF THIS BATTLEFIELD, I MUST ANSWER HIS CALL.

DRIP
DRIP

?


HEY.
ARE OUR ARMIES WITH-DRAWING SMOOTH-LY?
WHIP
HMMPH. NONE OF THEM STOOD A CHANCE.
KRUNCH
SPLASH



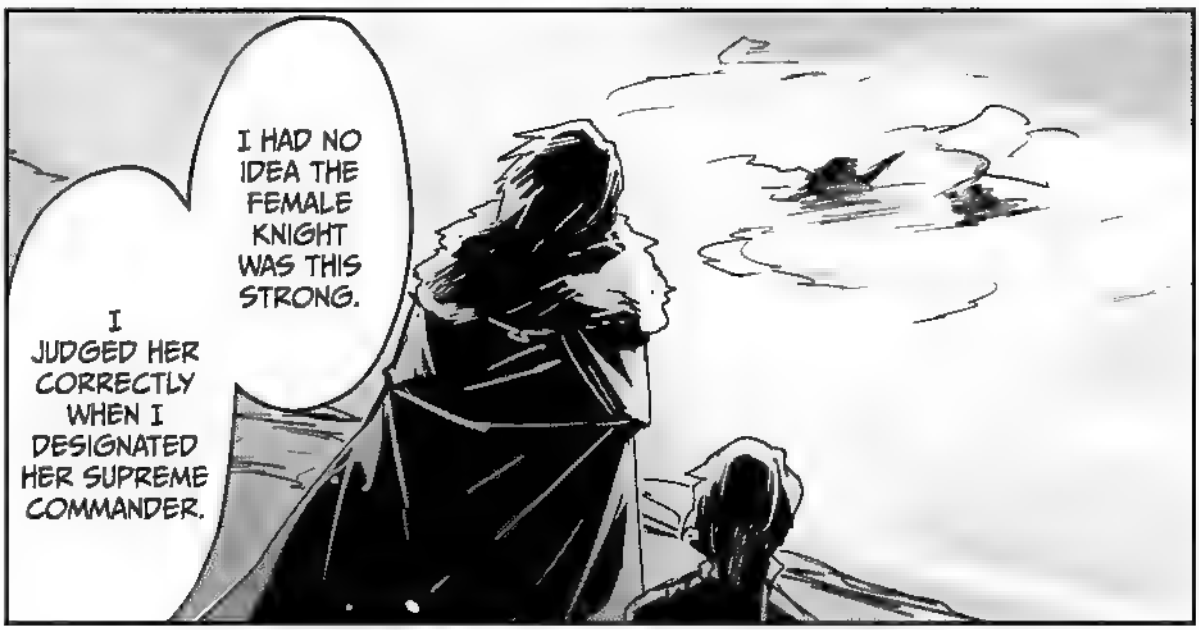
CLING
WHUD
BOOM
CLANG
BOOM
CLANG

ゴゴ
RUMBLE
ゴゴ
BOOM
SLASH
I NEVER ABANDON A BATTLE I CAN WIN!
HA HA HA!
I AM PLEASED ...
...YOU ACCEPTED MY CHAL-LENGE!
CLANG

GASP
THUD
STEP
STAB
STAB
STAB
STAB
STAB
STAB
BOOM

SWISH
!!
SLASH
YOUR CLAIM DISGUSTS ME!
I HAVE SEEN MUCH STRONGER MEN!
I AM PEERLESS!
YOUR ATTACKS ARE NOT EFFECTIVE AGAINST ME!
SPURT

WE'LL NEVER SEE ANOTHER FIGHT LIKE THIS IN OUR LIVES.
CLANG
AMAZ-ING.
CLANG
BOOM


I HAD NO IDEA THE FEMALE KNIGHT WAS THIS STRONG.
I JUDGED HER CORRECTLY WHEN I DESIGNATED HER SUPREME COMMANDER.

HOW-EVER, THE ANTARCTIC GENERAL IS STRONG AS WELL!
OLD MAN.
CAN SHE WIN?
SHE WILL WIN.
I KNOW HER STRENGTH WELL.

YOU'RE RIGHT.
IT'S EXACTLY AS THE SCHOLAR SAID.
SHE WILL HANDLE ANYTHING VICTORY CANNOT.

BESIDES, MY KING...
...WE HAVE ALREADY WON THIS BATTLE.

I CAN'T BELIEVE WE TOOK BACK AURORA ISLAND WITH MINIMAL LOSSES WITHOUT RESORTING TO BRUTE FORCE OR SURROUNDING THE CASTLE.

WHOOSH
STAB
WHOOSH
CLANG
THE HERO'S BEDROCK FLIP!
BOOM
ICE STORM!
WHOOSH
VERY WELL.
I WILL GIVE YOU YOUR REQUIEM.
CLINK
HA HA HA HA HA!
IMPRES-SIVE! COME ON!
CLANK

CLANG
GRIND
GRIND
GRIND
GRIND
YOU ARE AS STRONG AS I AM?
GRIND
IM-POS-SIBLE.
CLENCH
WHEN YOU LIVE WITH THE EXTRAORDI-NARY, YOU AT LEAST LEARN THIS MUCH.
GRIND
GRIND
LET'S GO!

SHE'S QUICK!
NO...
SHE'S MOVING EVEN FASTER!
CLANG
WHACK
SLASH
SLASH
CLANG

SLASH!

SUCH INCRED-IBLE... TECH-NIQUE...
URGH!
BOOM

SHE WON!
YEAAAH
THE LADY GENERAL WON!
DID SHE WIN?
SHE WON!
YAAAH
YAAAH
WE...
...WON!
AAAH

ORGANIZE A RELIEF FORCE FOR THE HOLY KEY ARMY!
IT'S TOO SOON TO CELEBRATE! KEEP A CLOSE WATCH ON OUR REMAINING ENEMIES!
TWITCH
THUD
YES, MA'AM!
GET TO IT!

NEW WEAPONS BORN FROM BLACK POWDER

Black powder was known to promote combustion and explode since ancient times. By turning this into a weapon, a new firearm was born.

THE GUNPOWDER AND FIREARMS BORN IN CHINA

The black powdered mention in this work is, like its name suggests, a type of gunpowder. Black powder is widely regarded as the very first of several types of gunpowder invented. It first appears in written records of China's Tang Dynasty during the 6th to 7th Centuries, which indicate mixing saltpeter, sulfur, and charcoal creates intense combustion and explosion.

I HAD SECRETLY COMMISSIONED METAL-WORKERS TO MAKE THEM, AND THEY SHOULD BE READY FOR USE SOON.
FOR EXAMPLE, TAKE THE GUNS THAT USE SALTPETER AND BLACK POWDER.
IN OTHER WORDS, I AM RESPONSIBLE FOR SENDING YOU TO WAR.
HOWEVER, I AM STILL HESITANT.

Apparently the Demon Queen had already ordered the production of a small arms prototype.

As described in the document, black powder is composed of saltpeter, sulfur, and charcoal. The ratios of the ingredients are adjusted according to the intended use as well as to regulate combustion speed and explosive power, but on average, the ratio is seven parts saltpeter, one part sulfur, and two parts charcoal.

True to its name, the substance appears to be a black powder. Because it is sensitive to friction, impact, and static electricity, it must be handled carefully. The black powder born in China was later used in weapons by the 13th Century when the Mongol Empire swept through Asia (the fire arrows mentioned volume 2, page 8 of the comics is one such example). Through the Silk Road, it was transmitted to Europe, and guns were born. (However, bronze gun barrels thought to be from the late 13th Century have been discovered in China, and it is believed those may have spread to Europe.)

Guns are widely believed to have first reached Japan in 1543 when the Portuguese arrived in Tanegashima, but there is discussion regarding the possibility that Asian-style guns had spread to Japan earlier.

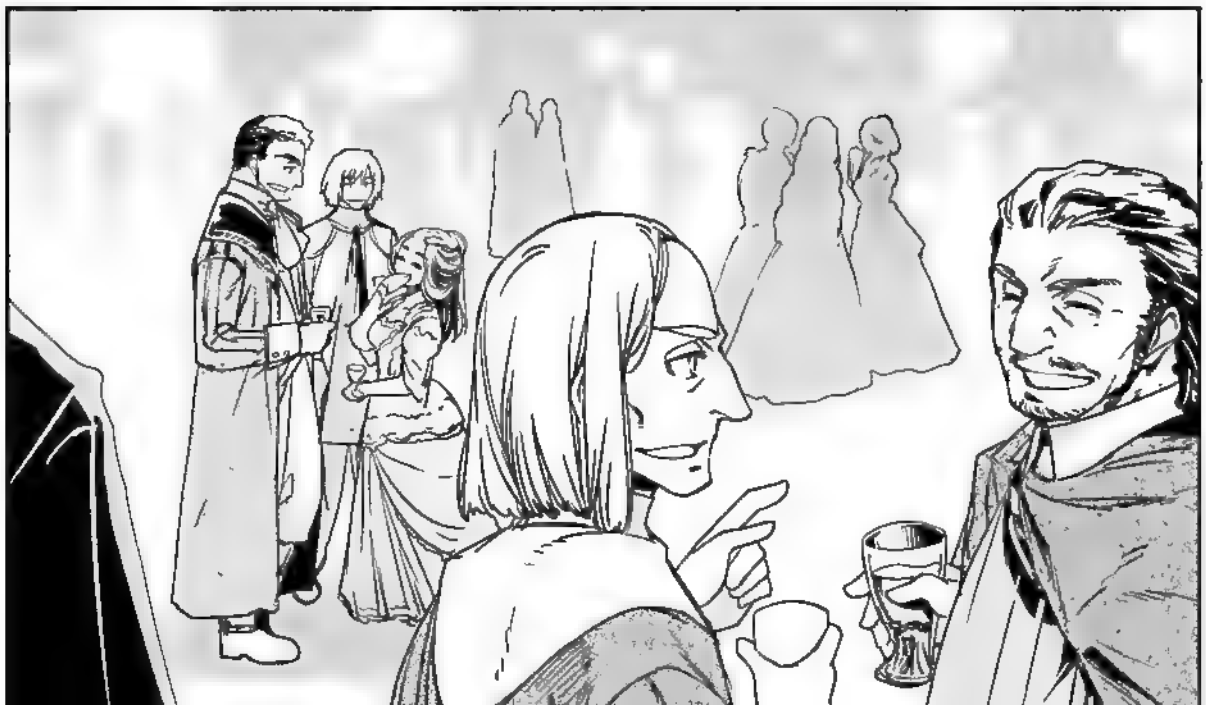
In *Maoyu*, gunpowder is treated as a technology unknown to humans and demons. However, the Demon Queen has invented fire arrows and is even working toward developing usable guns. This is an example of the Demon Queen's exceptional intelligence and way of thinking, but she fears their influence on her world may be massive, just as it was in our world. Will guns make an appearance in the story in the future?

Long spears and crossbows were the primary weapons of the Operation to Recover Aurora Island. Will guns ever appear on this battlefield?

THE LINGERING HEAT OF BATTLE

MY PEOPLE!
WE HAVE RECLAIMED AURORA ISLAND!
HOWEVER, OUR BATTLE WITH THE DEMONS IS NOT OVER.
AURORA ISLAND WILL BECOME THE VERY FRONT LINES IN OUR BATTLE AGAINST THE DEMONS...
...AND ITS RECOVERY FROM THE DAMAGES OF WAR ARE FACING DIFFICULT PROBLEMS.
MAOYU
Archenemy and Hero
CHAPTER 10
BUT SO LONG AS WE HAVE THE STRENGTH THAT BROUGHT ABOUT THIS VICTORY, WE HAVE NOTHING TO FEAR...
...AND I, THE LONELY WINTER KING, INTEND TO REWARD YOUR LOYALTY.

CHAPTER 10 Archenemy and Hero
Welcome Home, Hero!

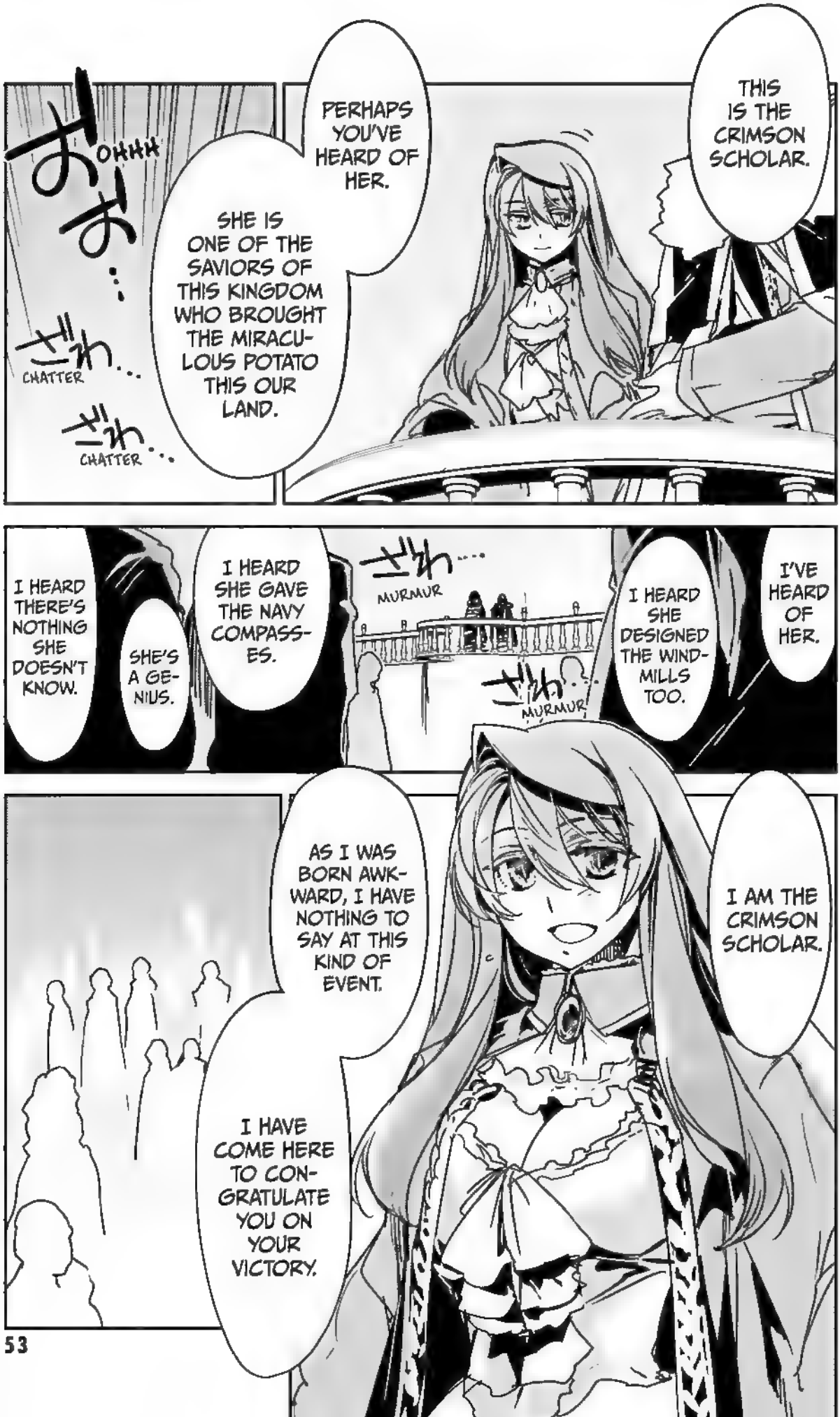


THE POST-WAR CLEAN-UP, RECON-STRUCTION, AND REWARDS.
THAT'S QUITE A LOT OF MONEY FOR A POOR COUNTRY TO SPEND.
BUT THIS IMPOV-ERISHED COUNTRY IS IM-PROVING.
THEY MAY BE POOR, BUT IF THEY HAGGLE DOWN THE REWARDS, NO ONE WILL STAY.
BY THE WAY, WHERE'S THE HERO?
HE SHOULD BE HERE. I WONDER WHERE HE IS?
I CAN'T MAKE MY RETURN PUBLIC YET.
I'LL HAVE SOME-THING TO EAT IN SECRET.
I'M NOT SURE WHO MIGHT RECOGNIZE ME.
HE SAID SOME-THING LIKE THAT.
I SEE.
FEMALE KNIGHT.
LISTEN WITH YOUR GOBLETS IN HAND.
TONIGHT WE HAVE A GUEST.
SHE ONCE TRAVELED THE SPIRIT WORLD WITH THE HERO...
...AND SERVED IMPRESSIVELY AS THE SUPREME COMMANDER ON THE FRONT LINES OF THIS BATTLE.

WITH THIS UNITY, WE CAN OVERCOME ANY DIFFI-CULTIES.
I AM THE FEMALE KNIGHT.
WE ACHIEVED THIS VICTORY THROUGH...
...THE COMBINED STRENGTH OF ALL THE PEOPLE AND SOLDIERS OF THE WINTER KINGDOM.
IT'S THE FEMALE KNIGHT.
わぁっ WOW

...THE PEOPLE OF OUR KINGDOM ARE STILL INDEBTED TO YOU.
THOUGH WE CANNOT KEEP YOU IN OUR COUNTRY...
THE FEMALE KNIGHT IS A PRIORESS OF THE LAKESIDE CONVENT.

パチパチパチ CLAP
パチパチパチ CLAP
おお WOW
パチパチ CLAP パチパチ CLAP パチ
I HOPE EVERY-ONE AGREES WITH ME!
THEREFORE, I WOULD LIKE TO GRANT YOU AN HONOR-ARY TITLE OF OUR KINGDOM!
パチ CLAP


THIS IS THE CRIMSON SCHOLAR.
PERHAPS YOU'VE HEARD OF HER.
SHE IS ONE OF THE SAVIORS OF THIS KINGDOM WHO BROUGHT THE MIRACULOUS POTATO THIS OUR LAND.
OHHH
CHATTER
CHATTER
I'VE HEARD OF HER.
I HEARD SHE DESIGNED THE WINDMILLS TOO.
MURMUR
MURMUR
I HEARD SHE GAVE THE NAVY COMPASSES.
SHE'S A GENIUS.
I HEARD THERE'S NOTHING SHE DOESN'T KNOW.
I AM THE CRIMSON SCHOLAR.
AS I WAS BORN AWKWARD, I HAVE NOTHING TO SAY AT THIS KIND OF EVENT.
I HAVE COME HERE TO CONGRATULATE YOU ON YOUR VICTORY.

THIS KINGDOM HAS BEEN TRULY KIND TO ME.
ITS WARMTH MELTS AWAY THE PAIN IN MY HEART.
I WILL NOT FORGET THE GENTLE SMILES OF THIS KINGDOM'S PEOPLE.
MAY THE FOUR SEASONS AND FOUR DIRECTIONS OF THIS COUNTRY RECEIVE COUNTLESS BLESSINGS.

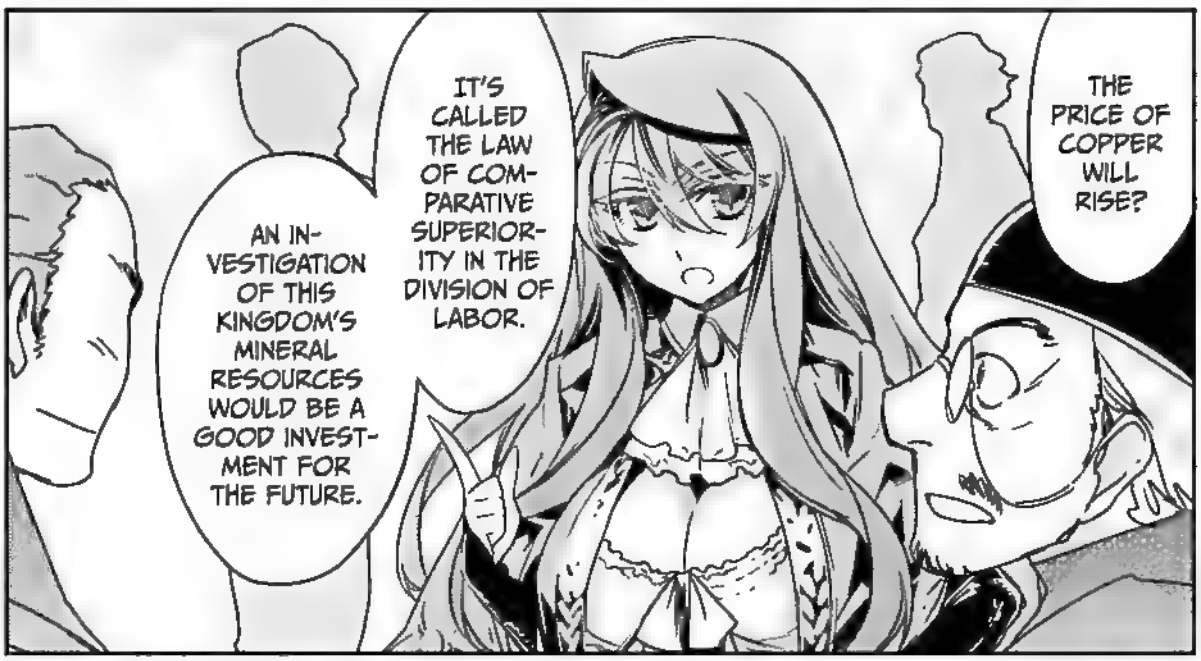
わあ あ CHEER あ あ
パチパチ CLAP パチ パチ CLAP
パチ パチ CLAP パチ CLAP パチ CLAP パチ

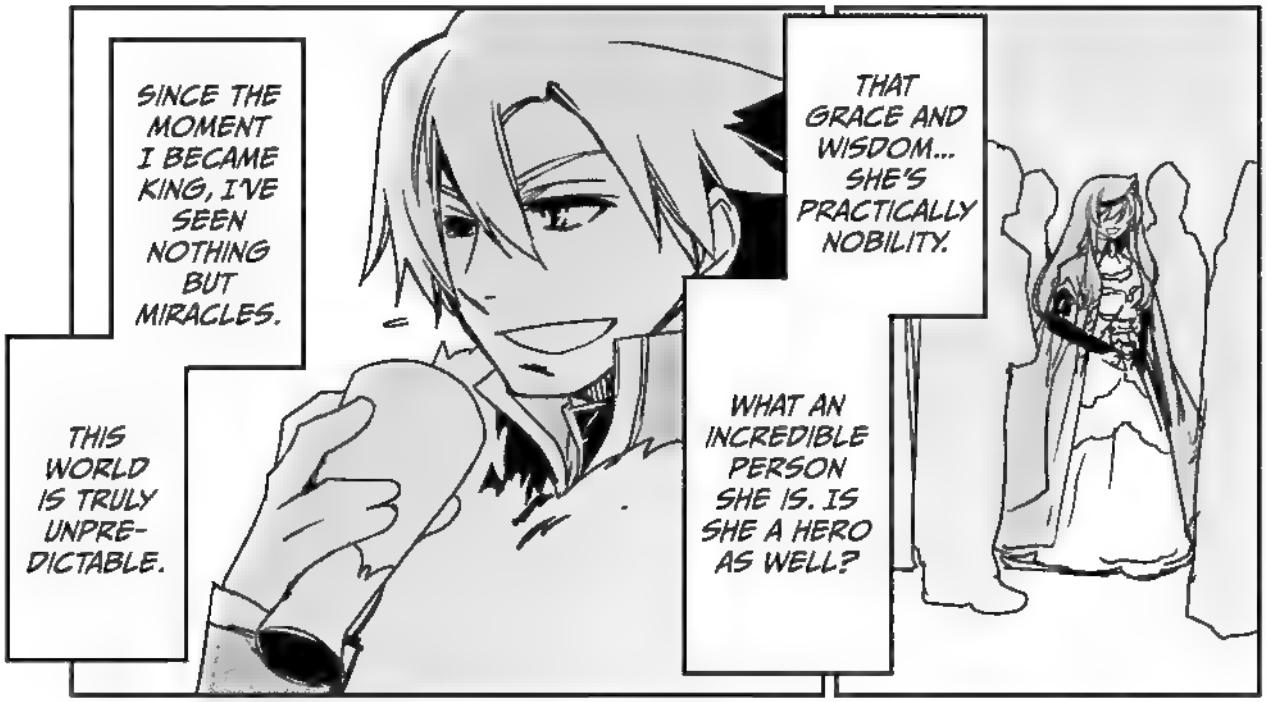
SIR.
SIR.
OH.
YEAH...

AS THE LEADER OF THIS KINGDOM, I AM DELIGHTED TO HEAR THE SCHOLAR'S GRACIOUS WORDS.
I HOPE SHE CONTINUES TO LEND HER WISDOM TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR KINGDOM.
AS THE SCHOLAR HAS ACADEMICS TO PURSUE, I WAS NOT ABLE TO INVITE HER TO THE PALACE...
...BUT HER ACCOMPLISHMENTS ARE DESERVING OF AN HONORARY TITLE!
ADDITIONALLY, I HAVE SOMETHING TO REPORT TO ALL OF YOU.
THIS WAR HAS BROUGHT THE SOUTHERN KINGDOMS CLOSER TOGETHER.
ALSO...
...I HAVE CONCLUDED THAT NOT ONLY IN OUR BATTLES AGAINST THE DEMONS UNTIL NOW...
...BUT ALSO IN COMMERCE, ACADEMICS, AND TECHNOLOGY, WE MUST WORK TOGETHER.
THE SOUTH IS A HARSH LAND SNOW BOUND BY OUR LONG WINTERS.
HOWEVER, I BELIEVE OUR PEOPLE HAVE THE STRENGTH TO OVERCOME THOSE HARSH CONDITIONS.

OUR WINTER KINGDOM HAS FORMED AN ALLIANCE WITH THE IRON KINGDOM AND ICE KINGDOM.
WE HAVE AGREED TO PROVIDE ONE ANOTHER ASSISTANCE IN THE FIELDS OF COMMERCE AND TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT.
FURTHERMORE, WE ARE CONSIDERING CREATING A FEDERATIVE STATE IN THE FUTURE.
I BELIEVE WE, WHO FOUGHT SIDE BY SIDE, WILL CONTINUE ADVANCING TOGETHER IN ALL FIELDS.
I ASK FOR YOU COOPERATION!
わあああ CHEER
パチパチ CLAP
パチ CLAP
パチパチ CLAP
TO THE LADY GENERAL'S COURAGE!
CHEERS!
CLINK
TO THE KING'S VICTORY!
CLINK
TO THE WISDOM OF THE CRIMSON SCHOLAR!
わあ
TO THE FUTURE OF THE SOUTHERN KINGDOMS!
あ CHEER あ

WE HAVE SEED POTATOES. THE CONVENT WILL PROVIDE YOU WITH TECHNICAL SUPPORT.
IT'S NOT VERY DIFFICULT, AND THE PROFITS OF THE PIONEERS ARE RISING.
IS IT DIFFICULT TO CULTIVATE?
WELL, WELL
THREE TIMES THE YIELD OF WHEAT?


AN INVESTIGATION OF THIS KINGDOM'S MINERAL RESOURCES WOULD BE A GOOD INVESTMENT FOR THE FUTURE.
IT'S CALLED THE LAW OF COMPARATIVE SUPERIORITY IN THE DIVISION OF LABOR.
THE PRICE OF COPPER WILL RISE?


SINCE THE MOMENT I BECAME KING, I'VE SEEN NOTHING BUT MIRACLES.
THIS WORLD IS TRULY UNPRE-DICTABLE.
THAT GRACE AND WISDOM... SHE'S PRACTICALLY NOBILITY.
WHAT AN INCREDIBLE PERSON SHE IS. IS SHE A HERO AS WELL?

!

HEY.

CHEW.
CHEW

HA HA HA
HA HA HA

THERE YOU ARE.
YOU DON'T HAVE TO HIDE.
IT'S JUST IN CASE.
ARE YOU SURE YOU DON'T WANT TO BE AT THE PARTY?
YES.
I ENJOY DISCUSSING THE BATTLE WITH OTHER KNIGHTS...
SHRIEK
SCREAM
...BUT I GREW TIRED OF BEING SURROUNDING BY THE SHRIEKING DAUGHTERS OF NOBLES.
YOU COULD AT LEAST WEAR SOMETHING FEMININE AND FRILLY TO A PARTY.
I DON'T REALLY ENJOY WEARING THOSE.
BESIDES, I'M SURE IT WOULDN'T SUIT ME.
THAT'S NOT TRUE. I THINK YOU'D LOOK GOOD.

REALLY?
GLINT
BESIDES, THEY SAY ANYONE CAN LOOK GOOD WITH THE RIGHT CLOTHES.
...
THE SCHOLAR IS POPULAR.
YEAH.
SHE'S PROBABLY WORKING HARD TO USE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO SPREAD HER THEORIES.
SHE TOLD ME HERSELF THAT SHE'S...
...THE DEMON QUEEN.
REALLY?
THAT'S GOOD.

THAT MEANS YOU'RE FRIENDS.
IT MEANS YOU'VE GROWN CLOSE ENOUGH SHE CAN CONFIDE IN YOU ABOUT SOMETHING THAT IMPORTANT.
GOOD?

DON'T SAY ANYTHING ABOUT THAT!
WHY
THAT'S NOT TRUE

WHAT?
WHY?
DEFINITELY ENEMIES!
NO! SHE'S MY ENEMY!

OH.
WHERE SHOULD I START?
DID YOU BRING THEM THERE, HERO?

AURORA ISLAND
REINFORCE-MENTS? 10,000
ANYWAY, ABOUT THE REINFORCEMENTS THAT SUDDENLY ARRIVED DURING THE BATTLE FOR AURORA ISLAND...
THE HOLY KEY EXPEDITIONARY FORCE.

A LOT HAPPENED IN THE SPIRIT WORLD, AND I ENDED UP HAVING TO GET THE HUMANS OCCUPYING GATEWAY CITY TO WITHDRAW.
OF COURSE, I COULDN'T DRIVE THEM OUT BY FORCE, SO I CAME UP WITH A PLAN.
TWO WEEKS EARLIER
SPIRIT WORLD GATEWAY CITY
SHRIEK
HE
HEY.
YEAH ...
SLURP
SPLURCH
I THOUGHT WE CAME TO PATROL THE CITY.
WHAT IS THIS PLACE?
IS THIS THE CURSE EVERY-ONE'S TALKING ABOUT?
!
THERE'S SOME-ONE THERE!
HAW! HAW HAW!
HEY...

RUSTLE
WHAT HAPPENED TO HIM?
HE'S CRAZY.
HAW HAW HA HA HAW
HE IS COMING!
HAW HAW HAW HAW
THE NIGHT IS COMING! THE DARKNESS IS COMING!
ROAR
THE GHOST KNIGHT IS COMING!
WHOOSH
HE'S COMING!
THE BLACK EVIL SPIRIT IS COMING!
HAW HAW HA HA HAW

YAAAH
ぎゃあああああ
....
CLANG
カシャン
HOW WAS THAT?
GOOD.
IT WAS PERFECT.
THIS IS PRETTY IMPRESSIVE.
HEH HEH
FAIRIES ARE SKILLED IN CREATING ILLUSIONS!
AHEM!
HEE HEE
GIGGLE

ALSO, IS THE NIGHT-MARE THRUSH AROUND?
ALL RIGHT.
SPLIT UP AND CREATE ILLUSIONS LIKE THESE ALL OVER THE PLACE.
YES! SIR!
OKAY.
GIGGLE
SHRIEK
SHRIEK
WHO IS HE?
HE'S MY FAMILIAR. I CAME UP WITH THE IDEA THE OTHER DAY.
I AM YOUR CREATION.
I AM AT YOUR SIDE.
WHOOSH
NIGHTMARE THRUSH
CREATE DREAM CORRIDORS THROUGH-OUT THE ENTIRE COMMAND ROOM.
SEND NIGHTMARES TO THE SELF-IMPORTANT NOBLES EVERY NIGHT.
AS YOU COM-MAND.

GATEWAY CITY OCCUPYING FORCES HEADQUARTERS
WE'RE AT OUR LIMIT!
WE CAN'T STAY IN THIS CURSED CITY ANY LONGER!
COMMANDER
MAYBE SO, BUT WHAT WILL YOU DO?
YOU'RE THE ONES WHO CHOSE TO STAY IN THE CITY...
...SO YOU COULD ENJOY THE BODIES OF DEMON GIRLS.
COMMANDER OF THE EASTERN FORTRESS
YOU'RE STATIONED IN AN OUTER FORTRESS! YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND!
EVERY NIGHT, WE HAVE NIGHTMARES!
THE CITY IS ENVELOPED IN THE CURSE OF THE DEAD!

THE OTHER DAY MY RELATIVE THE MIDNIGHT SUN KING COMMENCED THE AURORA ISLAND RECLAMATION OPERATION ...
..BUT HE WAS SLOWED DOWN BY THE INCOMPETENT KINGS OF THE SOUTHERN KINGDOMS AND SUFFERED A BITTER LOSS.
WHAT?
IN ANY CASE, WE'RE AT OUR LIMIT. WE SHOULD RETREAT --
NO, SEND REINFORCEMENTS!
!
ARE YOU STUPID?
BANG
WE CANNOT SIT IDLY WHILE SUCH A SERIOUS MATTER IS OCCURRING!
THE ENTIRE ARMY SHOULD HEAD TO AURORA ISLAND AS REINFORCEMENTS!

CLENCH!!!
THAT'S NOT MY PROBLEM!
I WILL NOT SHED THE NOBLE BLOOD OF THE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE TO PROTECT TRAITORS TRADING WITH DEMONS!
WHAT DO YOU INTEND TO DO ABOUT THIS CITY?
THERE ARE MANY CIVILIANS AND MERCHANTS LIVING HERE!
WHY DO SOLDIERS AND ARMIES EXIST IF NOT TO PROTECT THE PEOPLE?
GRIND!
WHAT? DO YOU HAVE A PROBLEM?
YOU ARE NOTHING MORE THAN A MERCENARY!
NOT A SINGLE ONE OF THE MEN IN MY FORTRESS IS A SCOUNDREL...
...WHO WOULD HESITATE TO DIE FOR THE PEOPLE!
IF THAT'S HOW YOU FEEL, YOU DO IT!
WHAT CAN A LOWLY MERCENARY DO? YOU WILL FLEE IMMEDIATELY!

SINCE WE'RE BOTH SOLDIERS, I'LL LEAVE YOU ABOUT 500 MEN!
HA HA HA HA HA
CLENCH
SLAM
STEP
HA HA HA
NOW YOU'VE SAID IT! EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY, YOU'RE THE COMMANDER!
I'M TAKING THE ENTIRE ARMY TO AURORA ISLAND AS REINFORCEMENTS!
IF DEMONS SHOULD RECLAIM THIS CITY, IT WILL BE YOUR FAULT!
?
YES SIR!
HEY! PREPARE TO LEAVE IMMEDIATELY!
WE DON'T HAVE THE FORCES TO DEFEND THE CASTLE, SO SUMMON EVERYONE BACK TO THE CITY.
FOR STARTERS.
WHAT SHALL WE DO?
SCRATCH
SCRATCH
COMMANDER.
THE SITUATION HAS BECOME QUITE SERIOUS.
AIDE

SEND ENVOYS TO INFLU-ENTIAL DEMONS IN THE AREA TOO.
THERE'S THE FIRE DRAGON CLAN OR SOMETHING, RIGHT?
WHAT ?
WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?
STEP
THEN GATHER INFLUENTIAL SHOPKEEPERS AND FORMER MASTERS OF DEMONS.
SCRATCH
SCRATCH
SEND FOR ABOUT TEN TOTAL OF THEM.
I'M GOING TO ASK FOR THEIR HELP...
...SO HUMANS CAN LIVE AMONG DEMONS.
AFTER THAT...
...I LED THE REIN-FORCEMENTS AROUND SO THEY WOULD ARRIVE AT THE RIGHT TIME.

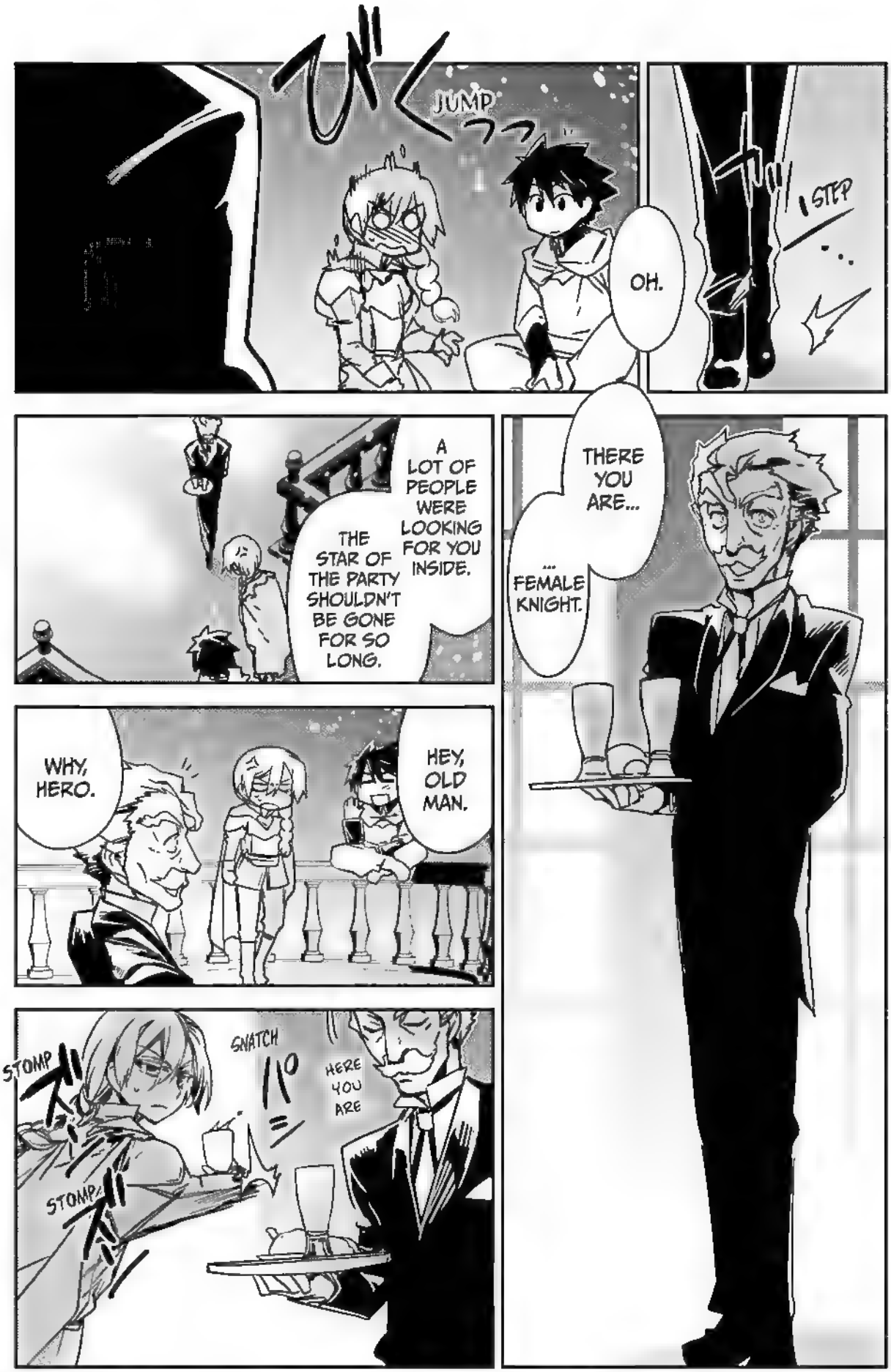
HMMPH
YEAH.
LOOKS LIKE I TIMED THEIR ARRIVAL PERFECTLY WITH THE DEMON QUEEN'S!
I SEE.
THAT'S WHERE THOSE REINFORCEMENTS CAME FROM.
APPARENTLY THE COMMANDER OF THE EASTERN FORTRESS IS NEGOTIATING WITH DEMONS.
I HAVE FAMILIARS WATCHING OVER THE AREA, BUT THERE HAVEN'T BEEN ANY DISTURBANCES.
WHAT HAPPENED TO GATEWAY CITY?
IN OTHER WORDS, THE HUMANS LOST THEIR STRONGHOLD IN THE SPIRIT WORLD...
...AND THE DEMONS LOST THEIR STRONGHOLD IN THE HUMAN WORLD.
I SEE.
IF IT COMES TO IT, I'LL MAKE SURE THE REMAINING HUMANS CAN RETURN TO THE HUMAN WORLD.

WE DIDN'T MAKE IT IN TIME TO SAVE THEM.
THEY WERE ROUTED BY THE RETREATING DEMON ARMY AND WERE DESTROYED.
BY THE WAY, WHAT HAPPENED TO THE RUNAWAYS... I MEAN, THE REINFORCEMENTS?
IN THE END, HE WAS MARCHED OFF TO THE HOLY CAPITAL FOR ALLOWING THE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE TO BE DESTROYED.
BUT THEIR PATHETIC COMMANDER USED HIS MEN AS SHIELDS AND MADE IT OUT SAFELY.
THANKS
CHOMP
I DO FEEL BAD FOR HIM, BUT HIS NUMEROUS MISTAKES CANNOT BE OVERLOOKED.
YOU COULD SAY HE BROUGHT IT ON HIMSELF.
YOU WANT SOME?
I SEE.
MAYBE I DID SOMETHING WRONG.

IT'S BEEN AN-OTHER YEAR.
HUH ?
IT'S BEEN ANOTHER YEAR SINCE WE WERE REUNITED AFTER A YEAR!
WHAT ?
WE MET A FEW TIMES IN THE SPRING.
YOU WANDER TOO MUCH!
YEAH.
TO FORCE THE IDENTITY OF THE DEMON QUEEN AND TRAINING THE BOYS ON ME!
YEAH...
SORRY,
SORRY,

WHAT ?
I SMILED BEFORE.
YEAH.
YOU SMILE NOW.
RE-ALLY ?
YOU'VE CHANGED.
... NOW ...
INSTEAD OF THE DRY...
..AND HOLLOW SMILES OF THE PAST...

?
IT MUST BE THE SCHOL-AR'S...
...NO ...
...THE DEMON QUEEN'S FAULT.
HERO.
I STILL...
BUT...
...EVEN SO...


JUMP
OH.
1 STEP
A LOT OF PEOPLE WERE LOOKING FOR YOU INSIDE.
THE STAR OF THE PARTY SHOULDN'T BE GONE FOR SO LONG.
THERE YOU ARE...
...FEMALE KNIGHT.
HEY, OLD MAN.
WHY, HERO.
STOMP
SNATCH
HERE YOU ARE
STOMP

THANKS.
HERO, WOULD YOU LIKE SOME?
STOMP
ズン ズン
STOMP
SEE YOU LATER
YEAH.
YOU'RE NOT SURPRISED.
ふ、が
CHOMP
IT'S BEEN A WHILE...
... HERO.
CHOMP
CHOMP
THIS IS GREAT
NO.
OF COURSE NOT.
IT'S THE MAGICIAN WHO WILL DIE A VIRGIN.
A-HA HA HA HA
YOU WON'T DIE A VIRGIN, WILL YOU, HERO?

WHY?
...FOR MAKING YOU GO ALONE.
...HERO...
YOU RESENT US...
BACK THEN, I LEFT WITHOUT CONSULTING ANYBODY.
I DON'T RESENT ANYONE.
?
YOU MAY THINK THAT, BUT...
HA HA HA HA
にょほほほほ
IT WOULDN'T BE JUSTIFIED.

YEAH.
HERO, YOU...
...ARE TOO STRONG.
YOU DIDN'T LEAVE US BECAUSE WE SLOWED YOU DOWN, DID YOU?
OF COURSE, THAT IS EXACTLY WHAT WE DID.
WITH YOUR STRENGTH, YOU COULD HAVE FOUGHT WHILE PROTECTING US...
...JUST AS YOU DID ON OUR ENTIRE JOURNEY.

I FEEL SORRY FOR MAKING YOU LONELY.
I DO NOT FEEL SORRY...
...FOR MAKING YOU GO ALONE.
SHOULD YOU FEEL LIKE IT, YOU HAVE THE STRENGTH ...
...TO FIGHT A THOUSAND SOLDIERS OR EVEN THE DEMON QUEEN.

AN ORDINARY HUMAN CANNOT ACCEPT YOUR STRENGTH.
YOU ARE STRONG ...
...BUT DON'T YOU BECOME LONELIER IN THIS WORLD THE MORE YOU USE YOUR STRENGTH?

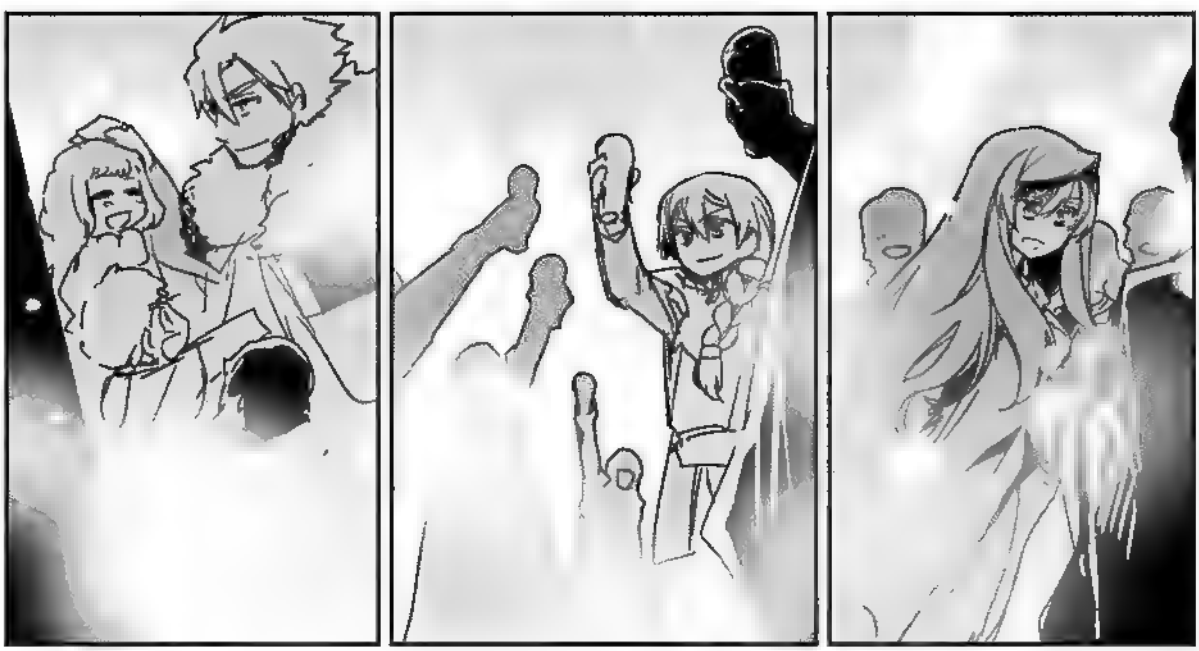
YOUR STRENGTH SEPARATES YOU FROM HUMANKIND.

YOU SHOULD BE HUMAN.
BUT...
...YOU ARE HUMAN.
YOU LEFT THE THREE OF US...
...BEHIND SO WE WOULDN'T BECOME LONELY, DIDN'T YOU?
I FEEL...
...WE ARE...
...GUILTY AS HUMANS OF DOING THAT TO YOU.
WE MADE YOU LONELY.
I APOLO-GIZE FOR MAKING YOU FEEL LONELY.
IT'S NOT LIKE THAT.

FAKE CLEAVAGE BELONGS TO MUSCLE-BOUND MEN!
ABOUT BREASTS AND BUTTS!
HOW TO DISCERN TRUE CLEAV-AGE!
NO, NO, NO!
YOU TAUGHT ME A LOT!
THE MOON IS NICE TONIGHT.
HUH?
HERO, THERE'S SOMETHING I'D LIKE YOU TO HEAR.

WE CAN DO THINGS NOW THAT WE COULDN'T DO TWO YEARS AGO.
WE ARE NOT WORTHLESS.
WE HAVE BEEN WORKING HARD SINCE WE PARTED WAYS.
EVEN WE CAN AIM FOR THE MOON.

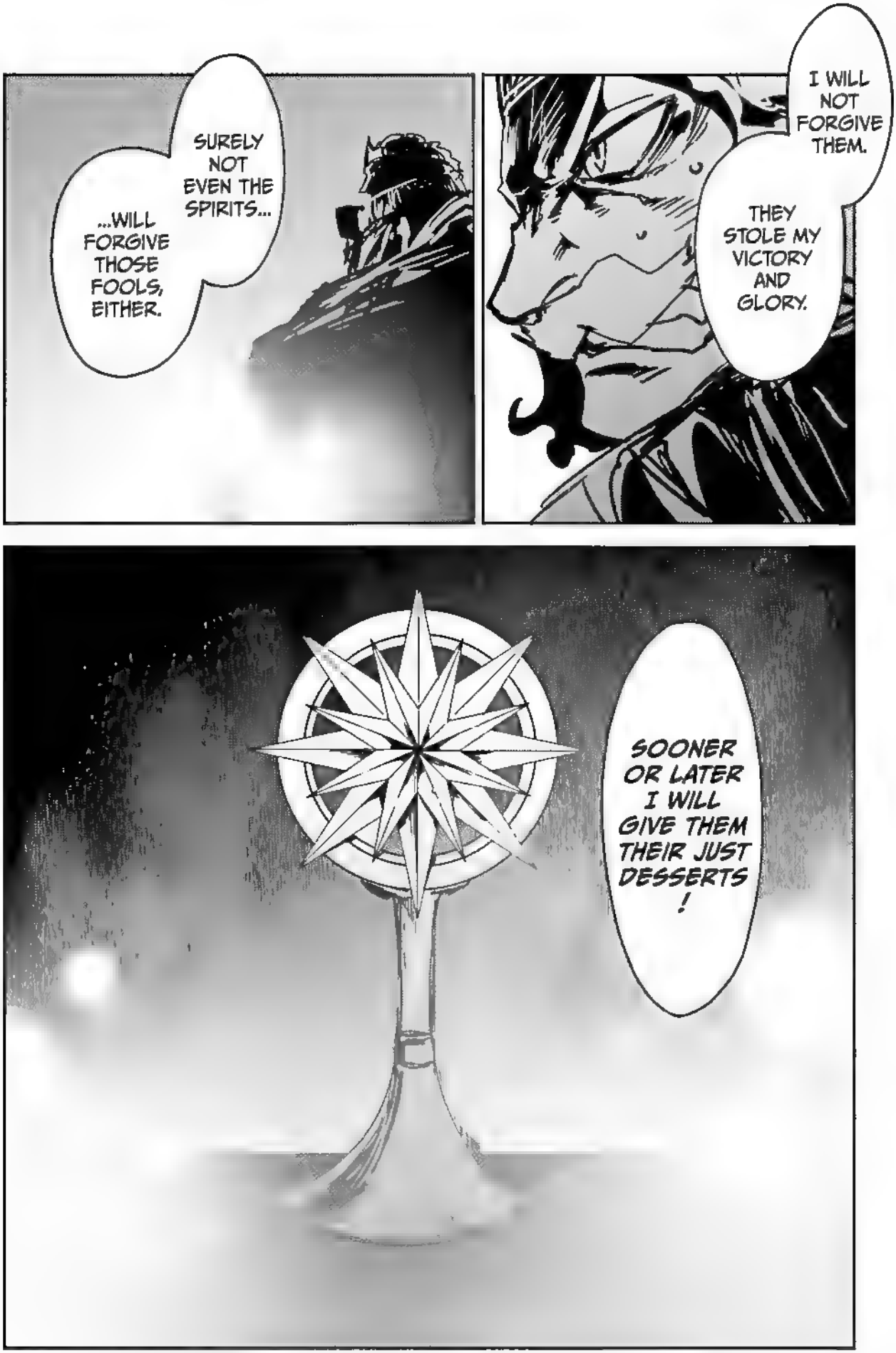
CAN YOU HEAR THE LAUGHTER?
DO YOU HEAR THAT MUSIC?
DO YOU SEE THE LIGHTS INSIDE?



I WILL NOT MAKE YOU LONELY ANYMORE.
THOUGH I STILL HAVE A LONG WAY TO GO.
EVEN WITHOUT YOUR EXCEPTIONAL STRENGTH, I WILL MANAGE.
THIS KINGDOM WILL NOT FORCE YOU TO SHOULDER PUNISHMENT ALONE.
I'M SURE THERE IS A PLACE WHERE YOU ARE NOT ALONE.
ISN'T IT A GOOD KINGDOM?
YEAH, ABSOLUTELY.
WELCOME HOME, HERO!
THANKS, OLD MAN.
I'M HOME!

CLINK

KRASH
Tsk!
CLOSE THE CURTAINS!
THE MOONLIGHT IS VEXING TONIGHT!
YES, SIR!
THIS LIQUOR IS TERRIBLE!
MAKE A NEW BATCH!
YES, SIR. I'M SORRY.
THE YOUNGSTER OF THE WINTER KINGDOM ...
...TOOK AURORA ISLAND WITH A CUNNING STRATEGY?
NOT ONLY THAT, BUT HE EXCLUDED THE MIDNIGHT SUN KINGDOM...
...AND CREATED AN ALLIANCE WITH THE IRON KINGDOM AND ICE KINGDOM?
HOW DARE THOSE FOOLS THINK SO HIGHLY OF THEMSELVES.


SURELY NOT EVEN THE SPIRITS...
...WILL FORGIVE THOSE FOOLS, EITHER.
I WILL NOT FORGIVE THEM.
THEY STOLE MY VICTORY AND GLORY.
SOONER OR LATER I WILL GIVE THEM THEIR JUST DESSERTS!

THE END CHAPTER 10
Welcome Home, Hero!

THE UPPER CLASS and HIGH SOCIETY

The dazzling and magnificent high society. The exclusive world where only the well mannered and educated members of the upper class can gather.

Many of the people attending the victory celebration at the royal palace are members of the Winter Kingdom's upper class.

WHERE THE UPPER CLASS INTERACTS

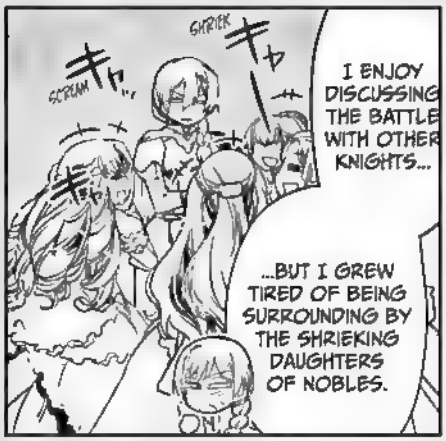
Most people imagine high society as a gorgeous place where well dressed men and women enjoying dancing and pleasant conversation. However, what is this world actually like?

In a word, high society refers to the place where members of royalty, nobility, and distinguished families gather and interact with one another. Because proper etiquette for speaking and behavior are required, only those living in environments where it's possible to learn such things are allowed to participate. Therefore, during the middle ages, the majority of participants in high society were nobles, and those without court ranks required at least some kind of title.

The most famous examples of high society are the salons held in French courts during the 17th Century. Because the purpose of these salons was to enjoy intelligent and refined conversations, their participants included intellectuals and scholars and were not limited to only nobility. However, as they still required a certain level of etiquette and education, commoners could not participate.

Even outside of France, events held at the royal palace were even more exclusive, and only those higher than a certain status were invited. Those who gathered there would exchange information and sometimes decide matters of politics and economics as though it were small talk. Though it may seem strange to common folk, it was not an usual occurrence in high society.

Additionally, high society served as a place for upper class women to network, and it was quite common for people who met at these events to form connections and construct relationships for future generations. This can also be said of modern times, but the connections between the upper class are very strong, and high society functions as a political stage to form said bonds.

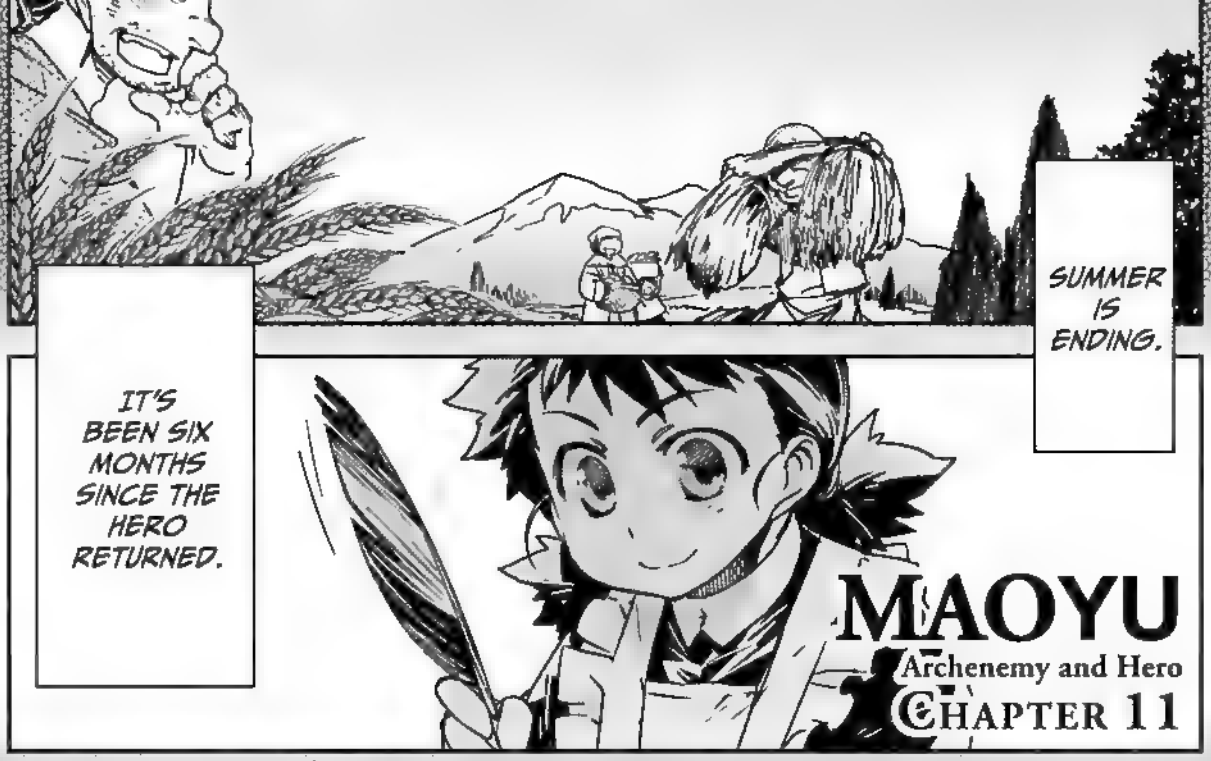

SHRIEK
SCREAM
I ENJOY DISCUSSING THE BATTLE WITH OTHER KNIGHTS...
...BUT I GREW TIRED OF BEING SURROUNDING BY THE SHRIEKING DAUGHTERS OF NOBLES.
OH.

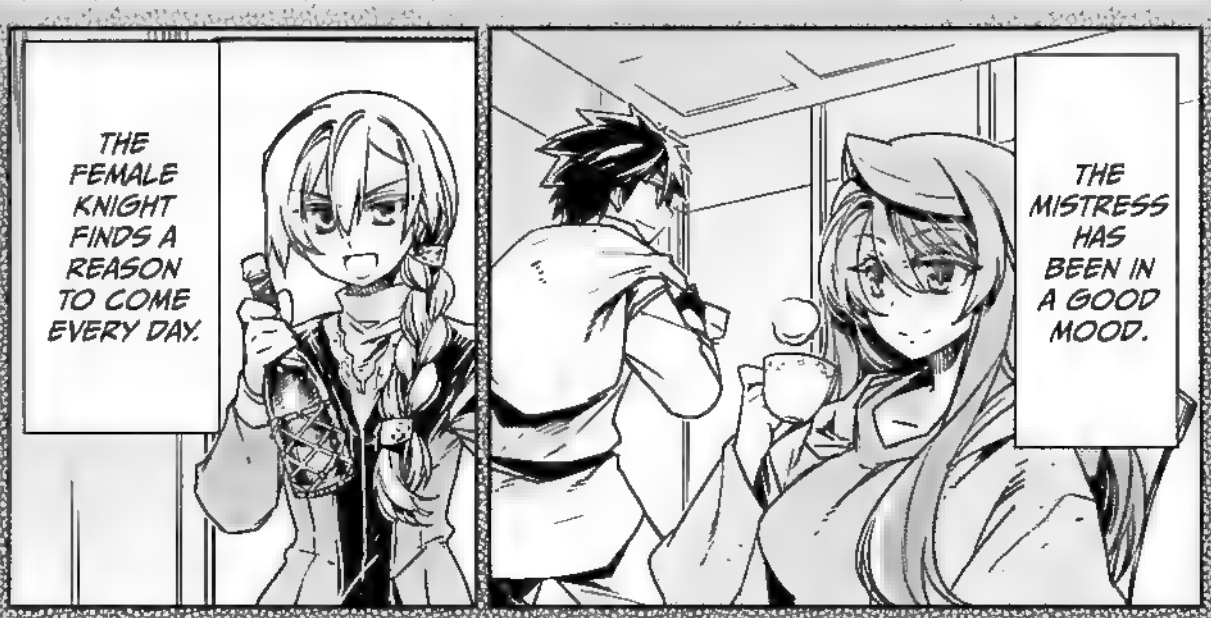
The guest of honor is always surrounded by a crowd. Maintaining elegant behavior can be exhausting.

In the 10th chapter of this work, a victory celebration is held at the Winter Kingdom's royal palace to celebrate the reclamation of Aurora Island, but mixed among the noble attendees are those who appear to be common folk. This may be because the Winter Kingdom is small as well as liberal. However, ultimately the Demon Queen's encounter with a craftsman of the Iron Kingdom will result in the creation of a new weapon.

PERFECTLY NUTRITIOUS

I'M TOO BUSY TO LOOK FOR HIM.
WHERE IS THE HERO?
AH, YES.
I GET IT!
I SEE
IMPRESSIVE, SCHOLAR.
...AND THAT'S THAT.
I AM SKILLED AT PROCESSING COPPER, IRON, AND JUST ABOUT EVERYTHING ELSE
...
OH.
IT'S NICE TO MEET YOU.
THANK YOU FOR COMING FROM SO FAR AWAY.
NICE TO MEET YOU, SCHOLAR.
I AM A CRAFTSMAN OF THE IRON KINGDOM.
SCHOLAR?
GRIND GRIND
HERO NUTRIENTS? DID SHE REPLENISH HER HERO NUTRIENTS?
SMOOTH
SMOOTH
THAT'S THE FEMALE KNIGHT.
I DIDN'T SEE HER FOR A WHILE. I WONDER WHERE SHE WENT.


SUMMER IS ENDING.
IT'S BEEN SIX MONTHS SINCE THE HERO RETURNED.
MAOYU
Archenemy and Hero
CHAPTER 11

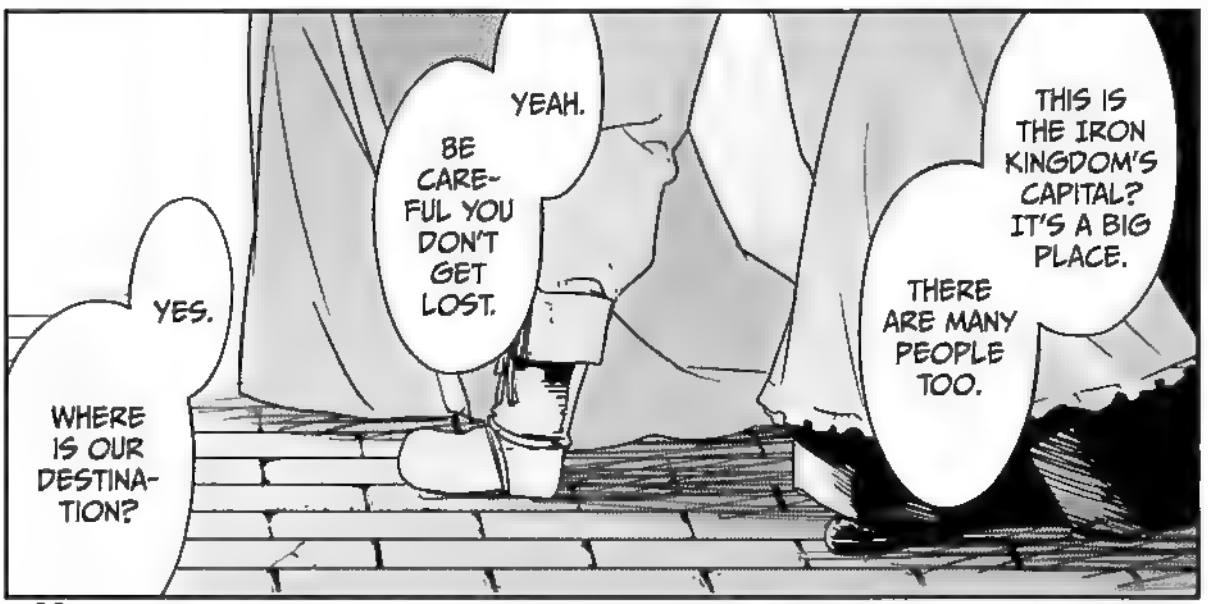

THE FEMALE KNIGHT FINDS A REASON TO COME EVERY DAY.
THE MISTRESS HAS BEEN IN A GOOD MOOD.

BECAUSE OF THAT, IT'S ALWAYS LIVELY IN THE MANSION.

THE NEWCOMERS TO THE VILLAGE HELPED TOO.
YESTERDAY I HELPED HARVEST THE VILLAGE'S POTATOES.
BECAUSE I RECEIVED SO MUCH, I DECIDED TO MAKE CHEESE.
I LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING IT COMPLETED.
THE MILK I RECEIVED AS THANKS IS VERY SWEET AND DELICIOUS!
OKAY.
IT'S TIME TO START WORKING.
YOU WERE WRITING IN YOUR DIARY?
THERE.

CHAPTER 11 Archenemy and Hero

What Do You Think, My Darling?


YES.
WHERE IS OUR DESTINATION?
YEAH.
BE CARE-FUL YOU DON'T GET LOST.
THIS IS THE IRON KINGDOM'S CAPITAL? IT'S A BIG PLACE.
THERE ARE MANY PEOPLE TOO.

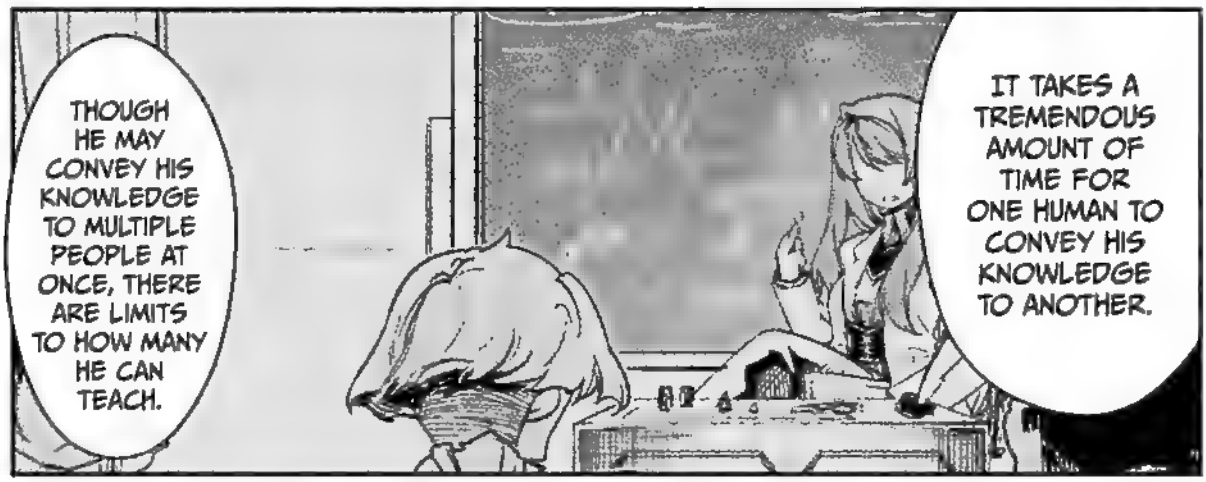
LET'S SEE.
THIS IS THE CRAFTS-MAN DISTRICT BY THE RIVER.
I'VE NEVER SEEN THIS BEFORE.
IT'S A GRAND SIGHT.
THE HOUSES OF THIS KINGDOM ARE MADE OF STONE.
THERE ARE SO MANY CHIMNEYS AND SO MUCH SMOKE.
THE SMITHS AND METAL CASTERS OF THE IRON KINGDOM ARE THRIVING.
THEY MAKE EVERYTHING FROM WEAPONS TO FARM TOOLS.
SO...
...WHY DID WE COME HERE TODAY?
YOU KNOW A LOT ABOUT THIS PLACE, HERO.
I USED TO TRAVEL ALL THE TIME. IT HELPS YOU LEARN GEOGRAPHY.
I WOULDN'T EXPECT LESS FROM ONE OF MINE.

WE'VE SPOKEN PREVIOUSLY ABOUT EDUCATION, HERO.
A CRAFTSMAN OF THE IRON KINGDOM CAME TO THE VICTORY CELEBRATION IN THE WINTER KINGDOM.
I ASKED HIM TO CREATE SOMETHING.
I BELIEVE EDUCATION ...
...IS THE MOST POWERFUL THING IN THE WORLD.
THE WORLD IS MUCH LARGER THAN ANYONE CAN IMAGINE.
AND HUMANS... THOSE WITH INTELLIGENCE...
...APPLY THEIR WISDOM AND KNOWLEDGE AND ASSUME THEY KNOW THE WORLD.
THEY PRESUME TO UNDERSTAND THE WORLD AFTER MAKING IT FIT TO THEIR STANDARDS.

THAT SOUNDS FAMILIAR.
PEOPLE ASSUME THEIR WAY IS THE ONLY WAY...
...OR THAT THEY'RE RIGHT.
IN ORDER TO DISPEL THAT DARKNESS, WE NEED KNOWL-EDGE.
IN THIS CASE, THAT MEANS EDUCA-TION.
FURTHER-MORE, EDUCATION IS EVEN MORE IMPORTANT BECAUSE ...
...WITHOUT EDUCATION, ONE CAN-NOT EVEN UNDER-STAND...
...THAT EDUCATION IS IMPORTANT.

THEY DON'T REALLY UNDER-STAND...
...THERE IS A BETTER WORLD.
FOR EXAMPLE, SERFS ARE UN-EDUCATED. THEY LACK KNOWL-EDGE.
I UNDER-STAND.
?
THEY DON'T EVEN UNDERSTAND THEY COULD BECOME THOSE PEOPLE.
THEY SEE LANDOWNERS AND NOBLES, BUT THEY DON'T UNDER-STAND HOW TO GET THERE.
NO.
PERHAPS IT'S ACTUALLY EASY.
...TO NEITHER UNDER-STAND WHAT YOU ARE...
...OR WHAT YOU CAN BECOME.
IT'S A VERY UNHAPPY SITUATION ...

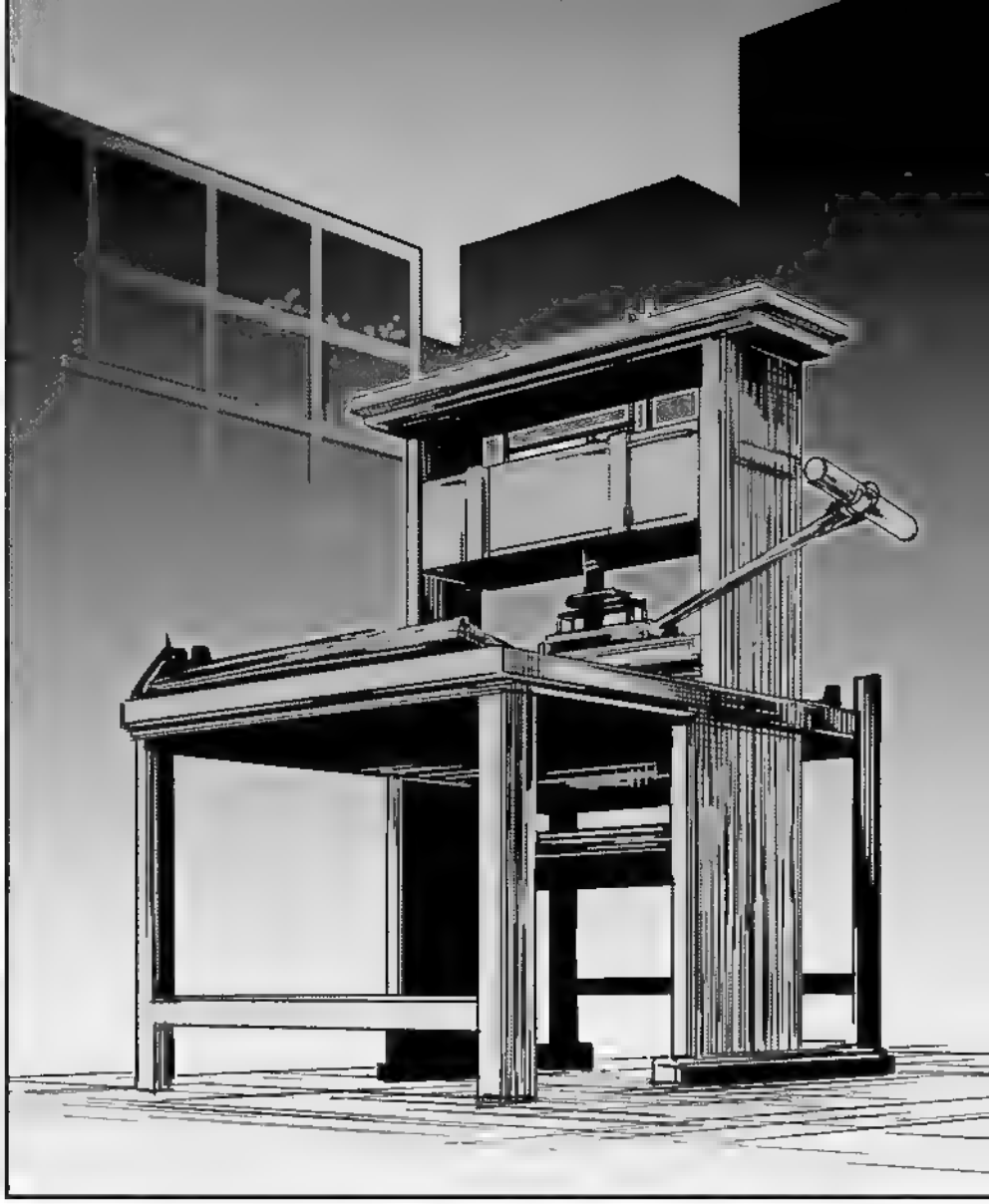
THAT'S WHY EDUCATION IS IMPORTANT, BUT IT HAS A MAJOR WEAKNESS...
...WHICH IS IT'S SLOW.

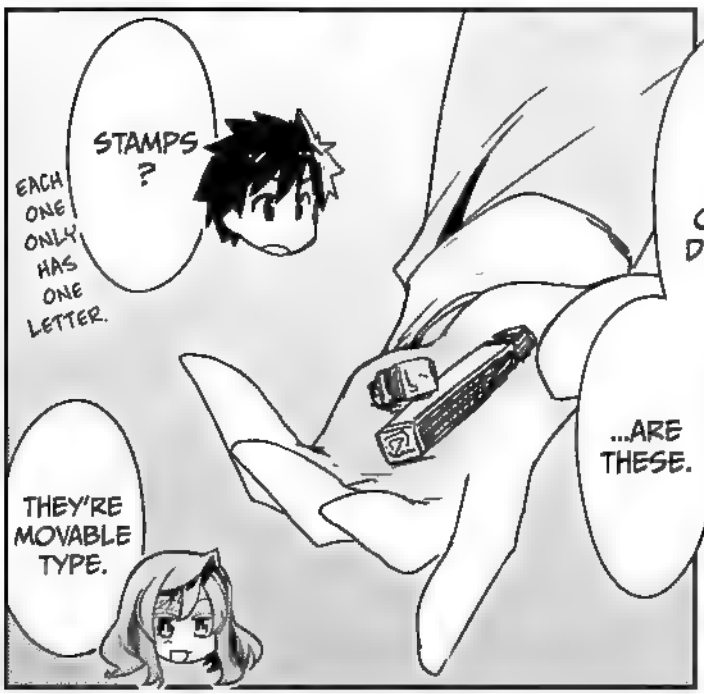

IT TAKES A TREMENDOUS AMOUNT OF TIME FOR ONE HUMAN TO CONVEY HIS KNOWLEDGE TO ANOTHER.
THOUGH HE MAY CONVEY HIS KNOWLEDGE TO MULTIPLE PEOPLE AT ONCE, THERE ARE LIMITS TO HOW MANY HE CAN TEACH.

DOCUMENTS ARE EFFECTIVE FOR RECORDING AND TRANSMITTING KNOWLEDGE...
IT TAKES DAYS FOR A PERSON TO TRANSCRIBE A SINGLE BOOK.
...BUT THE SPREAD OF THOSE TAKES TIME.
I SEE.
OH.
THIS IS IT, WE'RE HERE

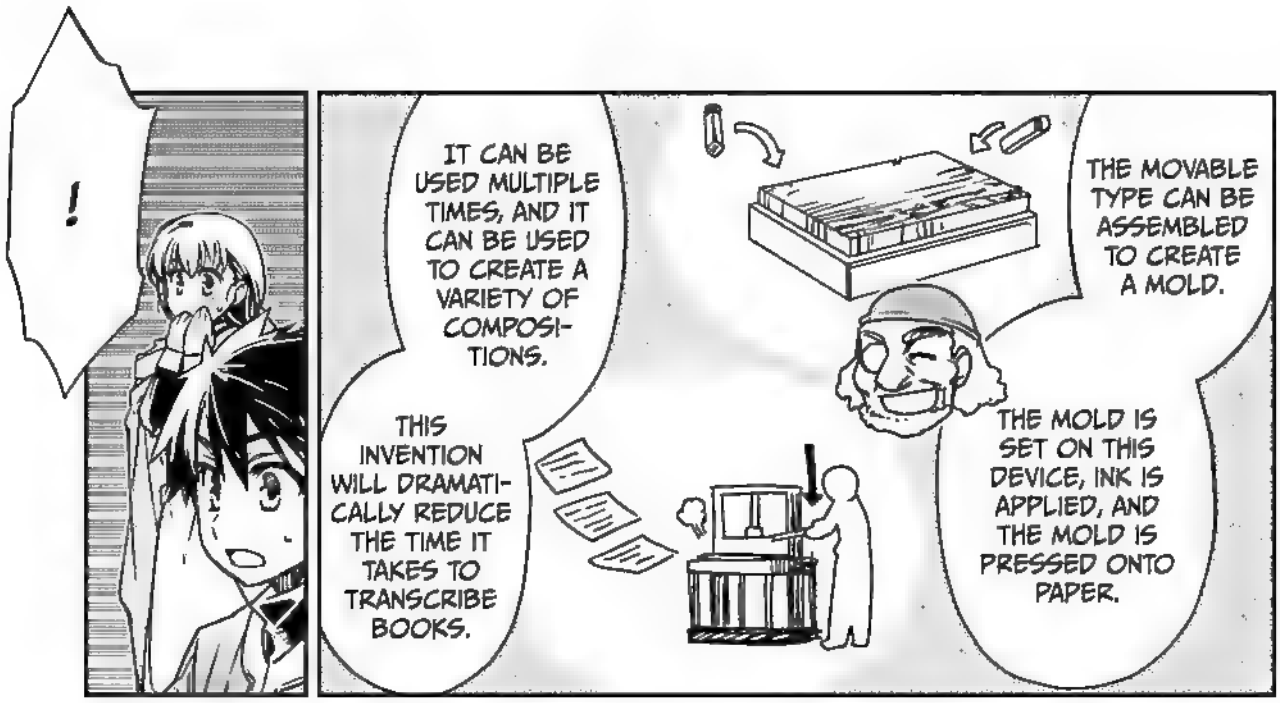
SCHOL-
AR!
LONG TIME, NO SEE!
YOU MUST BE EXHAUST-ED FROM YOUR JOURNEY!
COME IN. COME IN! I'LL MAKE YOU SOME TEA.
FIRST YOU SHOULD REST.
IT'S VERY CONVE-NIENT.
SINCE WE USED MY DIS-PLACEMENT MAGIC, IT ONLY TOOK A SECOND.
IT DID MAKE ME A LITTLE SICK.
....
THIS IS...
KREEA
YOU'RE AS IMPATIENT AS EVER.
はは HA HA HA
I'D LIKE TO SEE THE PROTO-TYPE FIRST.
VERY WELL. THIS WAY.

IT'S HUGE.
IT LOOKS LIKE A THRESHING MACHINE... OR A GRAPE PRESS.



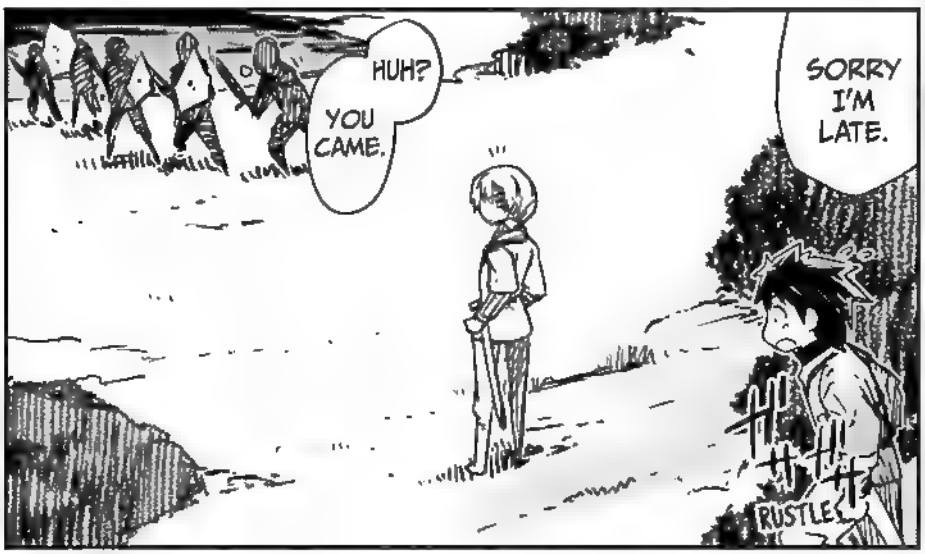

STAMPS?
EACH ONE ONLY HAS ONE LETTER.
THEY'RE MOVABLE TYPE.

THE CRUX OF THE DEVICE...
...ARE THESE.
IT'S STILL ONLY A PROTO-TYPE.
I COULDN'T MAKE IT ANY SMALLER.
RUSTLE
RUSTLE


!
IT CAN BE USED MULTIPLE TIMES, AND IT CAN BE USED TO CREATE A VARIETY OF COMPOSITIONS.
THIS INVENTION WILL DRAMATICALLY REDUCE THE TIME IT TAKES TO TRANSCRIBE BOOKS.
THE MOVABLE TYPE CAN BE ASSEMBLED TO CREATE A MOLD.
THE MOLD IS SET ON THIS DEVICE, INK IS APPLIED, AND THE MOLD IS PRESSED ONTO PAPER.

...THE PRINTING PRESS.
THIS IS OUR NEW WEAPON...

484
485
SWISH
483
SWISH
480
482
481

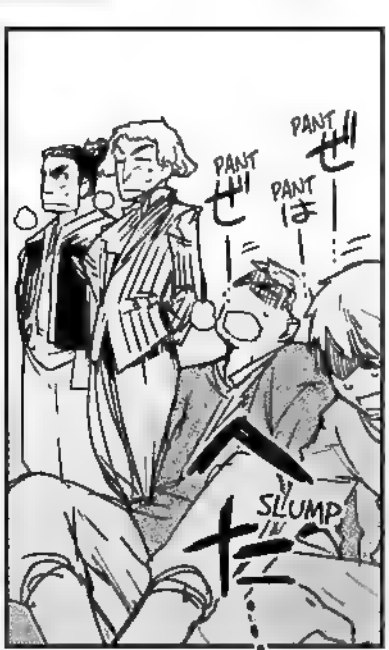

SORRY I'M LATE.
HUH?
YOU CAME.
RUSTLE

SWISH
SLASH

499
500

YOU'RE LATE.
I JUST MEANT TO TAKE THEM THERE BUT ENDED UP BEING THEIR GUIDE.

OH.
ARE YOU WRAPPING UP?
NO.
WE JUST FINISHED WARMING UP.
WHAT?!


PANT
PANT
PANT
SLUMP

DON'T SIT! STAND UP!
IF YOU GOT TIRED ON THE BATTLE-FIELD, WOULD YOU SIT IN FRONT OF YOUR ENEMIES?
LET'S GET TO IT.
ALL RIGHT!
NOW THE REAL TRAINING BEGINS!

THAT'S WHAT THIS WAS.
I KNEW IT.
EEK

YEAH.
I CAME BECAUSE I HEARD I COULD RECEIVE TRAINING FROM THE FEMALE KNIGHT WAR HERO.
PANT
SHE'S HORRI-FYINGLY HARSH.
STEP

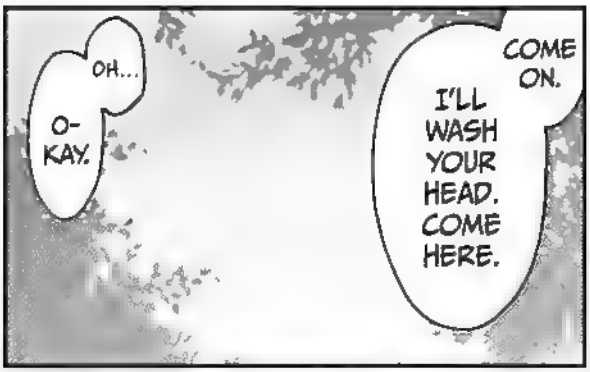
LET'S WRAP THIS UP!
RUN FIVE LAPS AROUND THE LAKE!
YOU'LL LIVE OR DIE DEPENDING ON WHETHER YOUR LEGS MOVE WHEN YOU'RE TIRED ON THE BATTLEFIELD!
EEK

BUT LOOK.
THE TWO OLDER STUDENTS ARE CARRYING SACKS OF POTATOES AS THEY RUN!
WHAT?
STEP
STEP
STEP
AMAZING.
SOMEDAY I'LL BE LIKE THEM!
IF YOU FOUND A CHILD WHILE RUNNING AWAY, YOU COULD CARRY THEM, RIGHT?
YOU'LL BE CARRYING THESE TOO!
THAT'S HOW YOU BECOME A HERO.
I'M DYING...
I'M GOING TO DIE!
STEP
STEP
I CAN SEE A GROUP OF BEAUTIFUL LADIES...
WAIT FOR ME, LADIES!
HA
HA
HA
HA
HA
HA
HA
HA
HA
HA
HA
HA

YAAAH
DASSH
THEY'RE SUPER DETER-MINED!
OKAY
LET'S RUN TOO!
LET'S GO!
SPLASH
WHEW!
NOTHING BEATS BATHING AFTER TRAINING.
THE WELL WATER IS SO COLD.
SPLASH
SPLISH
PASS ME THE WATER.
SURE.
LIFT
OH!
THIS TRULY IS COLD AND REFRESH-ING!
SPLASH

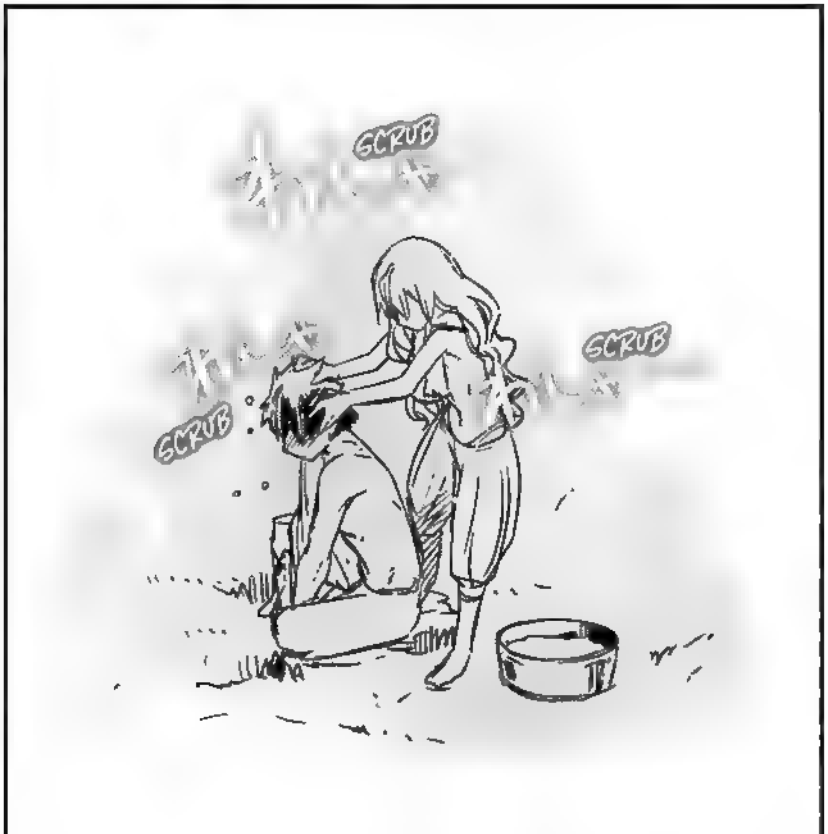
....
WHY ARE YOU MAKING THAT FACE?
Wha...
Wha...
Wha...
Pure white...

IS THERE ...
...SOMETHING YOU WANT TO SAY ABOUT MY BREASTS BEING SMALL ENOUGH TO HIDE BEHIND A SINGLE TOWEL?

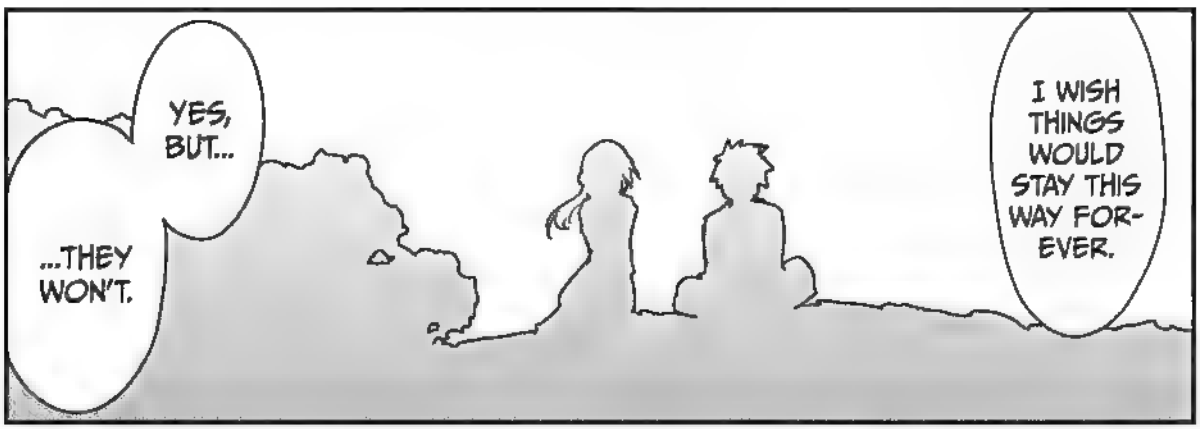

COME ON.
I'LL WASH YOUR HEAD. COME HERE.
OH...
O-KAY.

....
THAT'S FINE, THEN.
SHAKE SHAKE

パシャア
SPLISH
アアン


SCRUB
SCRUB
SCRUB

WHOOSH
WHEW.
I FEEL RE-FRESHED.
I FEEL A LITTLE DIZZY.
WHOOSH
YEAH.
THIS KINGDOM IS AWESOME AT THE END OF THE SUMMER.
THE WIND IS NICE.


I WISH THINGS WOULD STAY THIS WAY FOR-EVER.
YES, BUT...
...THEY WON'T.

THE WIFE AND MISTRESS MAY BE LIVING TOGETHER, BUT WE MUST FIGHT TO DETERMINE WHO IS THE WIFE...
BOTH THE SPIRIT WORLD AND HUMAN WORLD SHOULD START MOVING SOON.

OH!
THAT'S RIGHT!
WE MAY BE IN A STALEMATE RIGHT NOW, BUT THAT WON'T LAST FOREVER!
YEAH.
YOU'RE RIGHT.

WHAT?
WHAT?

YOU KNOW, I'VE BEEN THINKING.
THE OLD ARCHER, YOU, AND I...
...AND THE ANNOYINGLY BUXOM DEMON QUEEN.
IF TOGETHER WE CRUSHED THE MAJOR GENERALS, FORTRESSES, AND FORCES OF THE DEMONS...
...WOULDN'T THAT BRING A SWIFT END TO THE WAR?
MAY-BE...
...BUT WE CAN'T.
ISN'T THE DEMON QUEEN AN ALLY OF THE HUMANS?
SHE HELPED US IN THE PREVIOUS BATTLE.
THAT'S DIFFER-ENT.
THE DEMON QUEEN IS TRYING TO END THE WAR WITH-OUT VICTORY OR DEFEAT.
SHE'S TRYING TO SAVE THE DEMONS IN HER OWN WAY.
THAT'S PROBABLY WHY SHE USED SUCH DIFFICULT METHODS AT AURORA ISLAND

MAYBE THAT'S WHY.
SHE REALIZED THAT FROM THE BEGIN-NING.
I THINK YOU OR THE OLD MAN COULD BEAT HER EASILY.
BUT, WELL...
SHE'S PROBABLY ABOUT AS STRONG AS THE LONELY WINTER KING
WHAT?
BUT SHE'S THE DEMON QUEEN!
BESIDES, SHE'S WEAK.
...BUT...
...IT CAN'T EXTINGUISH THE FLAMES OF CONFLICT.
EXCEPTIONAL COMBAT STRENGTH COULD END THIS WAR...
HER KNOWLEDGE IS AMAZING, AND HER THOUGHTS ARE AMAZING TOO.
SHE'S INCRED-IBLE.

THAT'S ...
...WHY YOU...
LOVE...
YEAH.
THAT'S WHY WE BECAME FRIENDS.
BE-SIDES ...
...YOU'RE ALSO AMAZING.
WHAT?
YOU BECAME THE PRIORESS OF A CONVENT, AND YOU'RE HELPING PEOPLE.
THE OLD MAN IS EDUCATING A KING TOO.
EVERY-ONE'S SO AMAZING.

ALL I'M GOOD AT IS HAND-TO-HAND COMBAT.
EVERY-ONE ELSE SEEMS...SO BRIGHT.
COME TO THINK OF IT ...
...WASN'T ONE OF THE THREE IDIOTS MISSING?
OH.
HE'S...
SIR.
SIGN THIS DOCU-MENT.
GOT IT.
ALSO, I NEED YOUR APPROVAL ON THE ANTARCTIC TRADING VESSELS.
OKAY.
YOU ALSO HAVE THREE GROUPS OF GUESTS WAITING TO SEE YOU.

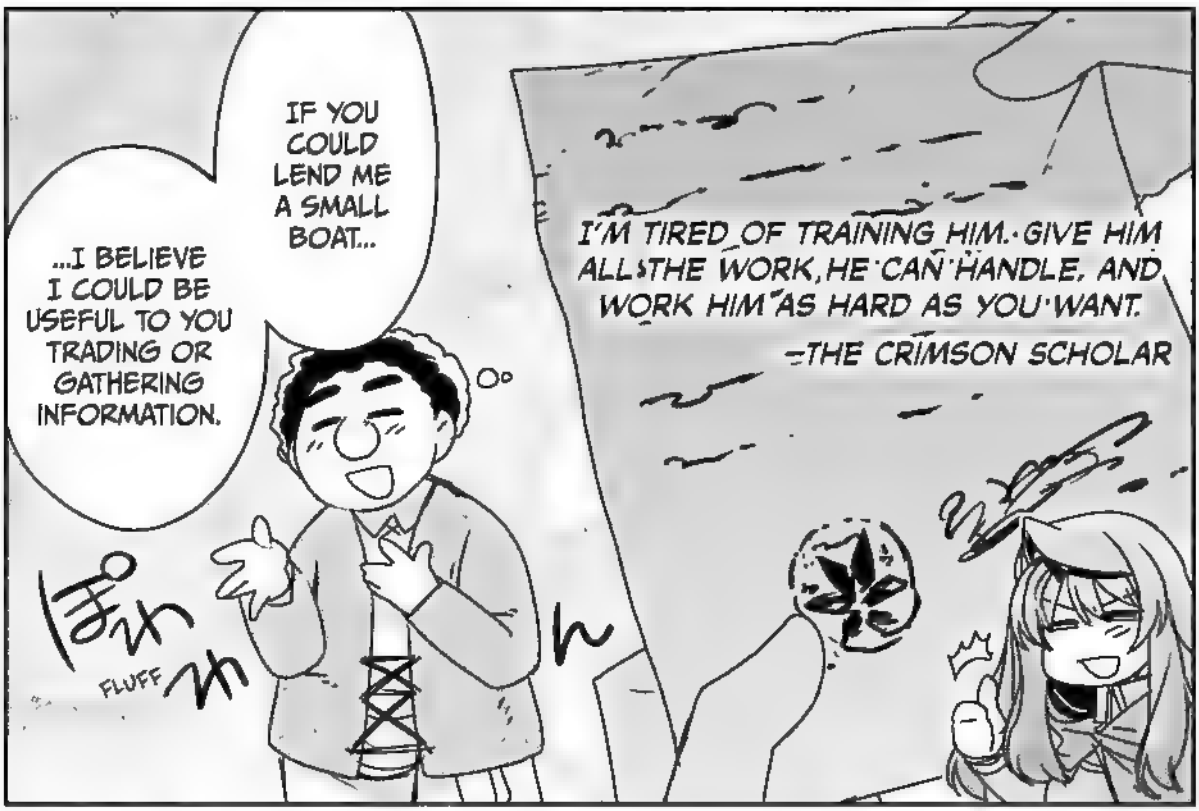
DOOM
CLICK
MY KING.
THE NEXT GROUP IS ALREADY WAITING IN THE ANTE-CHAMBER.
GOT IT.
HAVE THEM WAIT THERE.
YES, SIR!
SALUTE
I DIDN'T THINK I'D BE SO BUSY OVER THE THREE KINGDOM FEDERATION.
DOCUMENTS AND APPEALS, PETITIONS AND DEALS. THERE'S JUST NO END TO THEM.

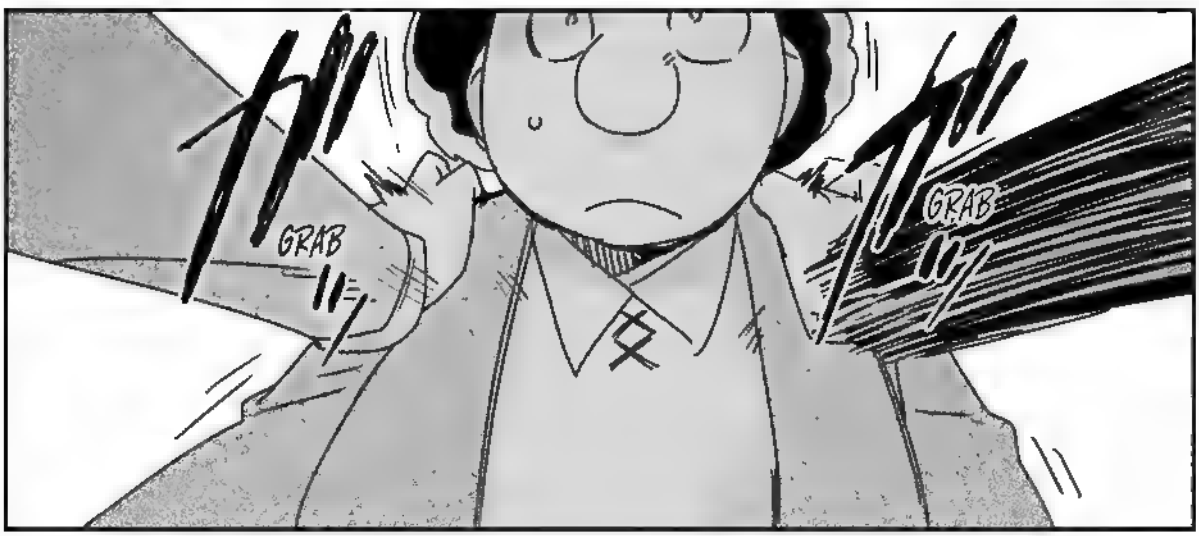
WITH REGARDS TO DOMESTIC AFFAIRS, IF THE EMBANKMENT BREAKS, WE'LL HAVE TO ANNOUNCE A POLICY OF FORCED LABOR.
LANDOWNERS WILL DELIVER THEIR TAXES TO THE CASTLE'S STOREHOUSES IN THE SPRING AND FALL.
BEFORE I JUST HAD TO FIELD AND FEED AN ARMY, SO WHY DO I HAVE SO MUCH MORE TO DO NOW?
IT'S TOO MUCH FOR A KING TO HANDLE ALONE.
REORGANIZING THE ARMY.
IMMIGRATION APPLICATIONS.
ACCESS TO ANTARCTIC TRADE ROUTES AND PORTS.
RISING TAX REVENUE FROM MERCHANTS.
EXCUSE ME.
MAY I LET THE NEXT MERCHANT THROUGH?
FINE, LET HIM IN!
THEY COLLAPSED AFTER ONE WEEK FROM ALL THE WORK.
WHAT HAPPENED TO THE CIVIL SERVANTS? WE HAD TAX OFFICIALS TOO.

MESSY
PERHAPS THIS
NO..
IS IT HERE?
IT'S A PLEASURE TO MEET YOU...
...MY KING...
PLEASE EXCUSE ME!
CLICK
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
OH.
EXCUSE ME.
THANK YOU FOR COMING, YOUNG MERCHANT.
SORRY I'M SO BUSY.
I'M SORRY, BUT COULD YOU GIVE ME A MINUTE?
I KNOW I RECEIVED YOUR LETTER...
...BUT IT GOT MIXED INTO THIS MONTH'S TAX LEDGER.
THAT'S WHAT YOU'RE LOOKING FOR?

OH.
THIS IS..
FLIP
THIS MUST BE YOUR TAX LEDGER.
THIS IS A PETITION... AND SO IS THIS.
OH.
THE LETTER OF INTRODUCTION I SENT YOU IS RIGHT HERE.
LIFT
NO, EXCUSE ME FOR BEING RUDE.
THANK YOU. THIS WILL SAVE ME SOME TIME.
HOW LONG HAS IT BEEN?
OH.
I NEVER THOUGHT I'D SEE THE SURFACE OF THIS DESK AGAIN.

ANYWAY, MERCHANT ...
...YOU'RE HERE ABOUT THE HERRING, YES?
FLIP
NO.
I'M THE THIRD SON OF A MERCHANT FAMILY. MY BROTHERS TOOK OVER THE FAMILY BUSINESS, SO THERE'S NO WORK FOR ME TO DO.


I'M TIRED OF TRAINING HIM. GIVE HIM ALL THE WORK, HE CAN HANDLE, AND WORK HIM AS HARD AS YOU WANT.
—THE CRIMSON SCHOLAR
IF YOU COULD LEND ME A SMALL BOAT...
...I BELIEVE I COULD BE USEFUL TO YOU TRADING OR GATHERING INFORMATION.
FLUFF


GRAB
GRAB

THIS KINGDOM WELCOMES PROMISING YOUNG MEN.
YOU CAME AT JUST THE RIGHT TIME.
HA HA HA HA HA
HA HA?
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.
WHY DO YOU LOOK SO HAPPY?
THANKS FOR TAKING US SO MANY PLACES.
IT'S NO PROBLEM.
YES.
IT MAKES ME A LITTLE DIZZY.
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
WHOOSH

WELCOME HOME!
SISTER, MIS-TRESS!
HERO!
BAM
STEP
STEP
STEP
STEP
STEP
STEP
YOU MUST BE EXHAUST-ED! LET ME TREAT YOU!
HEY!
DON'T RUN INSIDE THE MANSION.
OH.
SORRY.

IT'S CARBONATED.
THIS WOULD MAKE A BREWER GO PALE.
IT'S BUBBLY AND DELICIOUS.
IT'S PERFECTLY SWEETENED WITH HONEY TOO.
IT'S COLD.
I CHILLED THE ENTIRE BOTTLE IN WELL WATER!
IT'S ORANGE WATER!
A CHEF?
YOUNGER SISTER, PERHAPS YOU WILL BECOME A GOOD CHEF.
IT'S A PERSON WHO CREATES AND INVENTS DELICIOUS FOODS.
GOOD JOB.
HEE HEE
WOOOW
THAT'S AMAZING!
I WILL BECOME THAT! I WILL BE A CHEF!
DELICIOUS FOOD...

DASSH
どたたたた…
HEY!
I THINK SHE MIGHT HAVE BEEN CONFUSED.
HA-HA-HA
OH!
HEY!
WAIT!
ばぁん
BANG
I'LL BECOME A CHEF!
I'LL MAKE MY FAVORITE FOODS EVERY DAY AND EAT THEM!
YOU'RE RIGHT.
SHE WOULD TRY TO BITE ANYONE WHO CAME CLOSE.
SHE GAVE THE CHIEF MAID QUITE A SHOCK.
SHE SAID THE LADY WITH GLASSES WAS MEAN.
BUT SHE SEEMS TO BE FEELING BETTER.
AT FIRST SHE WAS ALWAYS HIDING BEHIND HER SISTER ON THE VERGE OF TEARS.
IS THAT RIGHT?
YEAH.
LATER SHE TOLD ME HUMAN GIRLS CAN BE QUITE SPIRITED.
I HAD NO IDEA.
REALLY?

?
WHAT?
HMMPH
SIT THERE.
HUMPH
YOUR HAIR IS WILD.
WHAT?
YOU DON'T NEED TO DO THAT.
I'LL COMB IT FOR YOU.
I DO.
THE APPEAR-ANCE OF SOMETHING IS A REFLEC-TION OF ITS OWNER'S DIGNITY.
SWISH
SWISH

I CAN'T BELIEVE THE COMMANDER OF THE EASTERN FORTRESS IS HOLDING AN ASSEMBLY FOR THE MERCHANTS AND INFLUENTIAL DEMONS.
I WAS SURPRISED WHEN I VISITED GATEWAY CITY AS YOUR AGENT.
ARE YOU GOING TO GATEWAY CITY TOMORROW?
YEAH.
THEY'RE HOLDING AN AS-SEMBLY.
TWITCH
THE DAUGHTER OF ARCHDUKE FIRE DRAGON IS SERVING AS A MEMBER OF THE ASSEMBLY AND LIVING IN GATEWAY CITY NOW.
THAT SHOULD HELP KEEP THE DEMONS IN CHECK...
HAS THE CITY SETTLED DOWN SINCE THEN?
SWISH
SWISH
YEAH.
THE COM-MANDER IS PRETTY COMPE-TENT.
OH.
SOR-RY.
YANK
OW!
IT'S TANGLED IN MY HAIR!

I CAN'T.
THEY SAID THEY'RE HOLDING A FESTIVAL ON THE MAIN STREET OF THE CITY.
COME RIGHT BACK ONCE THE ASSEMBLY IS OVER.
AHEM
A FESTIVAL?
IT'S AN EASTERN CELEBRATION.
THE COMMANDER SUGGESTED IT. IT'S MEANT TO PROMOTE INTERACTION BETWEEN THE HUMANS AND DEMONS.
THEY'LL HAVE LOTS OF FOOD FOR FREE, SET UP LIGHTS AT NIGHT, AND PLAY MUSIC.
DO YOU HAVE TO GO?
OOH!
REALLY?
THE MEMBERS OF THE ASSEMBLY AND AGENT OF THE DEMON QUEEN SHOULD SET AN EXAMPLE BY ATTENDING TO ERADICATE THE ANXIETY OF THE RESIDENTS...
...ACCORDING TO PRINCESS FIRE DRAGON.

BOOM
BOOM
BOOM
BOOM
YEAH.
IT'S GOING PRETTY WELL FOR A LAST MINUTE PLAN.
I'LL GET SOMETHING TO DRINK.
WOW.
IT'S A NICE AND LIVELY FESTIVAL.
MAYBE I'LL BUY SOME KEBABS.

I'D LIKE TWO MUGS OF ALE.
YOU'RE THE COMMANDER OF THE EAST.
I'LL GET YOU SOME COLD ONES. WAIT HERE.
THANK YOU.
HOW ARE THINGS GOING?
THEY'RE THRIVING.
EVEN THE RASCALS SHOULD BEHAVE THEMSELVES TODAY.
I HOPE SO.
AFTER ALL, THE FESTIVAL'S A TON OF FUN.
NOTHING'S BETTER THAN NOT FIGHTING.
I'M DONE WITH WARS.
BEING SMOKED AND CHASED OUT IS NOT A PLEASANT THING.
YOU'RE RIGHT.
I PROMISE NOTHING LIKE THAT WILL EVER HAPPEN.

I BOUGHT DRINKS.
WHERE SHOULD WE EAT?
I BOUGHT FOOD.
TWITCH
STEP
THERE YOU ARE.
I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR YOU, DARLING.

YOU'RE NOT MY WIFE.
WHIMPER
IT'S THE PRINCESS
YOU'VE BEEN HIDING FROM ME, YOUR WIFE.
WHAT A HEART-LESS ATTITUDE.
UMM ...
I'M SORRY I TOLD HER...
...YOU LEFT, BLACK KNIGHT.
YEAH
EITHER WAY, SHE WOULD'VE FOUND OUT IMMEDI-ATELY.
THEY DON'T BE-LONG TO ME.
ヒュ ヒュ
WHIMPER
まよ
THERE'S NO NEED TO USE YOUR WILES.
MY HEART AND BODY ALREADY BELONG TO YOU.
BOOM
BOOM

ANYWAY, YOU LOOK NICE.
AND YOU ALSO LOOK CUTE, DEMON GIRL.
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO SAID EVEN COMMONERS DRESS UP...
...ON FESTIVAL DAYS.

I...
I'M EMBARRASSED TO BE DRESSED LIKE THIS.
YOU'RE STILL SAYING THAT?

AN UNMARRIED DEMON WOMAN SHOULD PUT HER BODY ON DISPLAY!
YOU MUSTN'T HIDE IT.
ONLY THE DRAGONS DO THAT.
WHIMPER

DAR-
LING!
WHEW
はふ
はふ
WHEW
THEY HAVE BAKED POTATOES.
LET'S HAVE SOME.
THEY'RE GOOD
MY DAR-LING!
WHAT DO YOU THINK?
TWIRL

WHAT DO I THINK? IT'S A NICE FESTIVAL.
PEOPLE ARE REALLY EXCITED ABOUT IT
DISAPPOINTMENT
RUMBLE
BURN
BURN
HEY, UH...
CAN'T YOU BE A LITTLE MORE...
HUH?
WHISPER
WHISPER
COMPLI-MENT HER CLOTHES OR SOME-THING.
IT'S A NICE NIGHT.
WHAT DO YOU THINK?
TWIRL
YOU WANT SOME POTA-TOES?
WHAT ...
WHAT DO YOU THINK?
SPIN
ARE YOU DANCING IN TIME WITH THE SOUND?
SPIN
WHAT DO YOU THINK?
WHIMPER

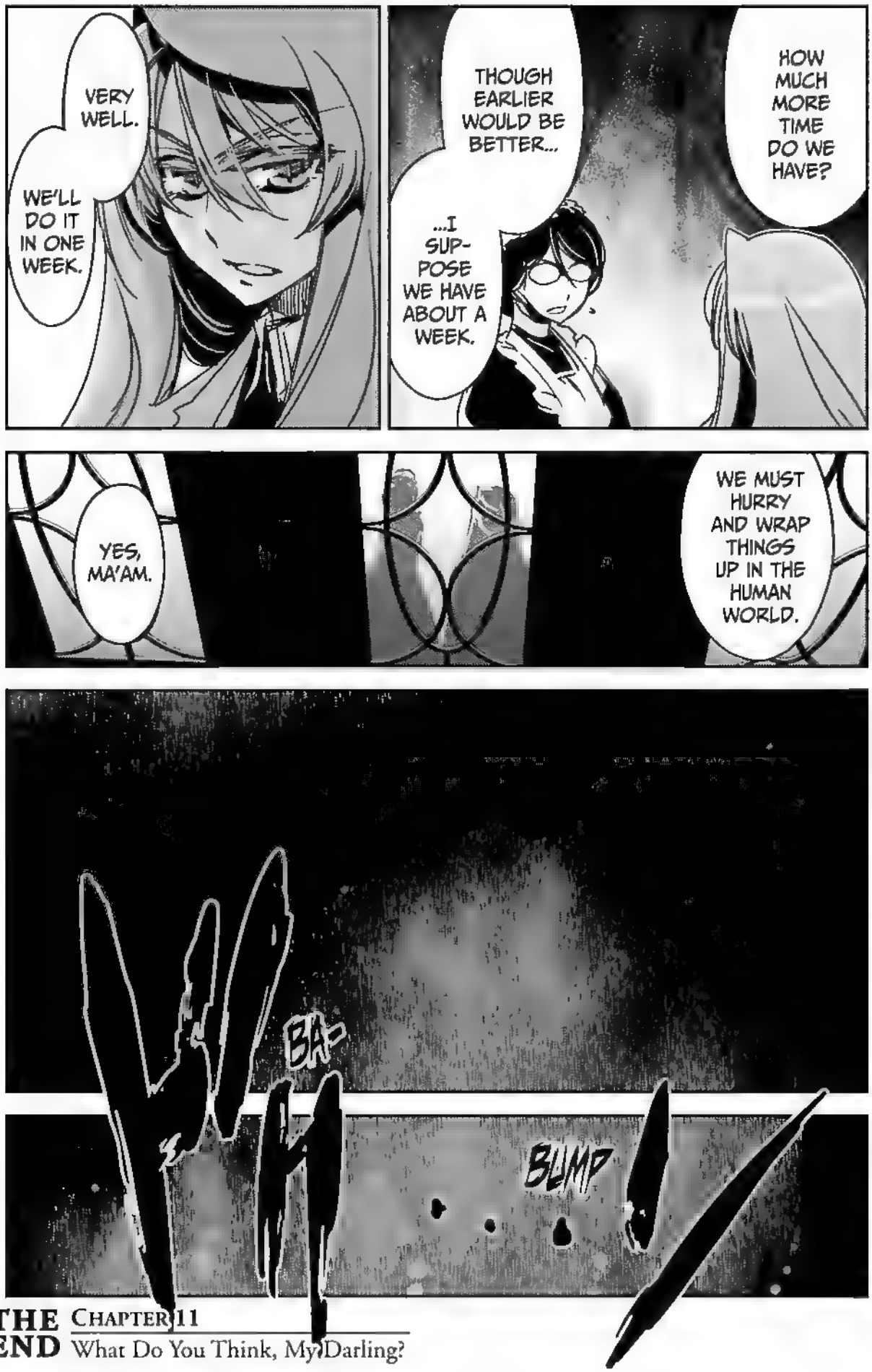
MY
...
...
LING
...
DAR
...
...
...
HERO
?
RUMBLE
BURN
BURN
YOU'RE SO DUMB
I SEE
OH.
OH, RIGHT!
YOU LOOK GREAT!
SINCE YOU HAVE A NICE BODY, YOU LOOK GREAT IN EVERY-THING...
...BUT TODAY'S CLOTHES ARE ES-PECIALLY EXOTIC AND WON-DERFUL!
YOU IDIOT. YOU'RE COMPLI-MENTING HER TOO MUCH.
THANKS.
YOUR ARMOR IS DIRTY. USE THIS TO CLEAN IT
IS THAT RIGHT, MY DARLING?
I... I AM THE LUCKIEST PERSON IN THREE KINGDOMS!
NERVOUS

BY THE WAY, DARLING ...
...I AM A LITTLE DRUNK.
REALLY? DO YOU WANT TO REST A WHILE?
I'VE RESERVED A ROOM AT GATEWAY CITY'S BEST INN.
WILL YOU... TAKE ME THERE?

STRA-TEGIC RE-TREAT!
WHOOSH
OH.

STOMP
STOMP

!!!
SOR-
RY!
I'M GOING TO SLEEP!
STOMP
STOMP
HERO.
DID YOU ALREADY HAVE DINNER ...
I PLEDGE MY ETERNAL DEVOTION TO MY DARLING.
RUMBLE
I SEE.
THAT'S THE SECOND TIME THIS MONTH.
THE RUMBLING HAS GROWN LOUDER TOO.
IT'S BECOME MORE FREQUENT AS WELL.
YES. SHE'S LIKELY AT HER LIMIT.


VERY WELL.
WE'LL DO IT IN ONE WEEK.
HOW MUCH MORE TIME DO WE HAVE?
THOUGH EARLIER WOULD BE BETTER...
...I SUP-POSE WE HAVE ABOUT A WEEK.
YES, MA'AM.
WE MUST HURRY AND WRAP THINGS UP IN THE HUMAN WORLD.
BAP
BUMP

The PRINTING PRESS and the SPREAD of BOOKS

The printing press, which can print books simply by combining movable type, did much to popularize books. It was incredibly useful for educating people.

THE HISTORY OF THE PRINTING PRESS AND THE EDUCATION OF THE PEOPLE DUE TO THE SPREAD OF BOOKS

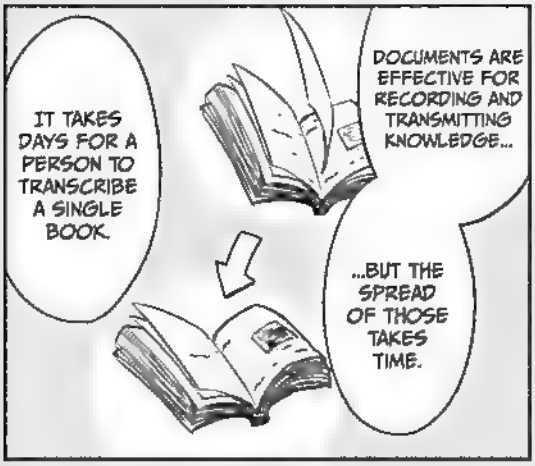
Of the three greatest inventions of the world, the "*Maoyu* Lecture" pages have already explained compasses and gunpowder. The final invention is the printing press discussed in this section.

Before the advent of the printing press, books were expensive and only people of a certain class could read them.

Letterpress refers to boards formed by combining wooden or metal stamps engraved with letters or numbers, or movable type. Though German metalworker Johannes Gutenberg is often credited with inventing printing during the mid 15th Century, the method of printing using movable type previously existed in China.

The oldest existing movable type belonged to 11th Century man Bi Sheng and is made of Chinese porcelain. Additionally, movable metal type was supposedly made in Korea during the 14th Century. In other words, movable metal type was in use for roughly a century before Gutenberg.

However, Gutenberg's invention is considered groundbreaking because it made the mass production of movable type possible. Creating movable metal type requires a mold (a template into which liquid metal is poured). In Korea, molds were made from sand, but Gutenberg successfully created his out of metal. Because of this, he was able to accurately reproduce the same movable type even after repeated use of the molds. This allowed for the easier production of movable type and greatly increasing the practicality of using letterpress printing.


IT TAKES DAYS FOR A PERSON TO TRANSCRIBE A SINGLE BOOK.
DOCUMENTS ARE EFFECTIVE FOR RECORDING AND TRANSMITTING KNOWLEDGE...
...BUT THE SPREAD OF THOSE TAKES TIME.

Many of the people attending the victory celebration at the royal palace are members of the Winter Kingdom's upper class.

In Europe, letterpress printing technology blossomed largely due to the writing system of its regions. Unlike in Europe, where everything could be expressed using the alphabet, the Chinese writing system required a vast number of movable type making it difficult for letterpress printing technology to take hold.

In *Maoyu*, the Demon Queen declares the letterpress printing a weapon to spread education, and in Europe, after the renovation of Gutenberg's letterpress printing technology, the number of books being read exploded. In that regard, the Demon Queen's thinking is right on the mark.

DEPARTING COMRADES

THANK YOU.
WOULD YOU LIKE SOME?
PANT
PANT
PANT
PANT
HE'S PROBABLY ENGAGED IN MAJOR BUSINESS NEGOTIA-TIONS RIGHT NOW.
HE UNDER-STOOD THE SCHOLAR'S TEACHINGS BETTER THAN EITHER OF US.
I WONDER WHAT THE MERCHANT'S SON IS DOING NOW.
IT SEEMS HE HAS PASSED US.
SO, WHAT?
WE'LL PASS HIM BACK SOON ENOUGH.

DO YOU KNOW HOW MUCH BLOOD WAS SHED TO CONQUER GATEWAY CITY?
TWO YEARS OF TIME AND MASSIVE WAR EXPENDITURES...
YOU WASTED EVERYTHING PUT INTO THE SECOND EXPEDITIONARY FORCE!
WHAT YOU'VE DONE IS AN AFFRONT TO THE WISHES AND HOPES...
...OF THE WILL OF THE SPIRITS OF LIGHT AND EVERY ONE OF THEIR BELIEVERS.

YOU'RE... YOU'RE WRONG!
I DIDN'T RUN...
I DID NOT BETRAY THEM!
THAT'S RIGHT! REINFORCEMENTS... I LEFT TO PROVIDE REINFORCEMENTS FOR AURORA ISLAND!

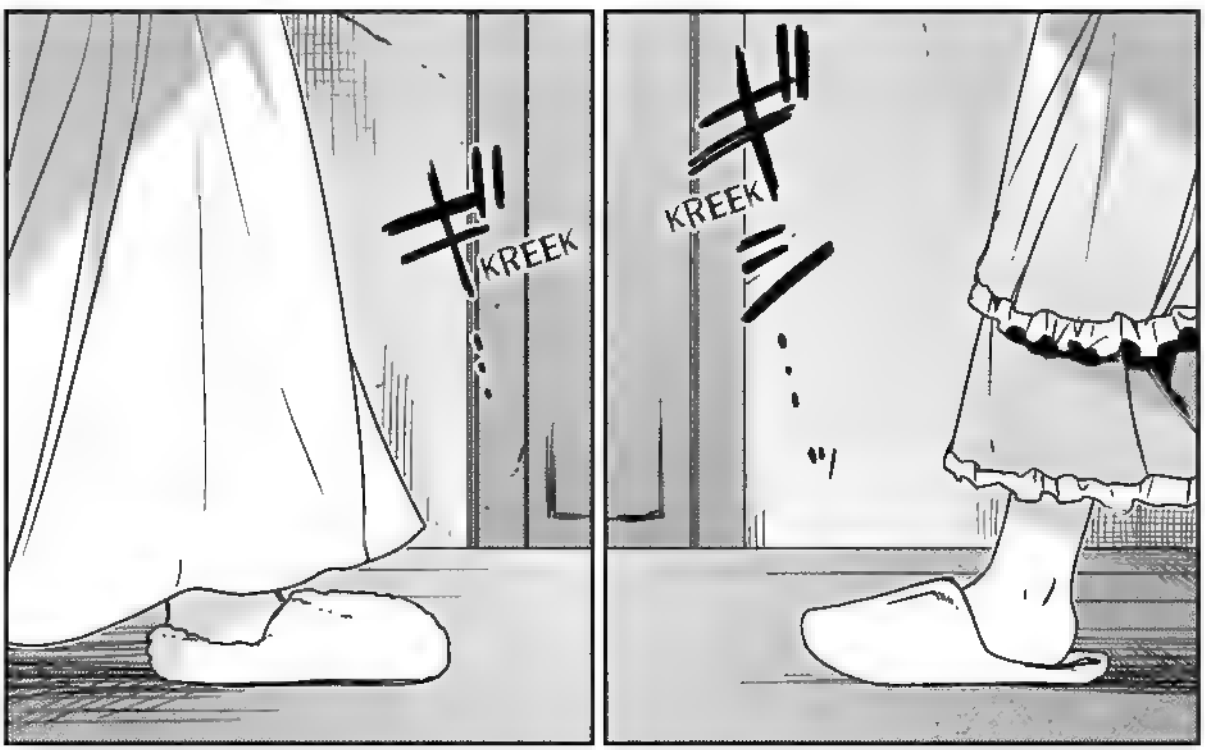
MAOYU
Archenemy and Hero
Chapter 12

AURORA ISLAND WAS RECLAIMED THROUGH OUR ACTIONS!
BESIDES, IN GATEWAY CITY, THE GHOSTS AND DEMONS WERE REBELLING.
WE WERE SUFFERING HORRIFIC ATTACKS.
THE COMMANDER RESERVES THE RIGHT TO MAKE STRATEGIC DECISIONS!

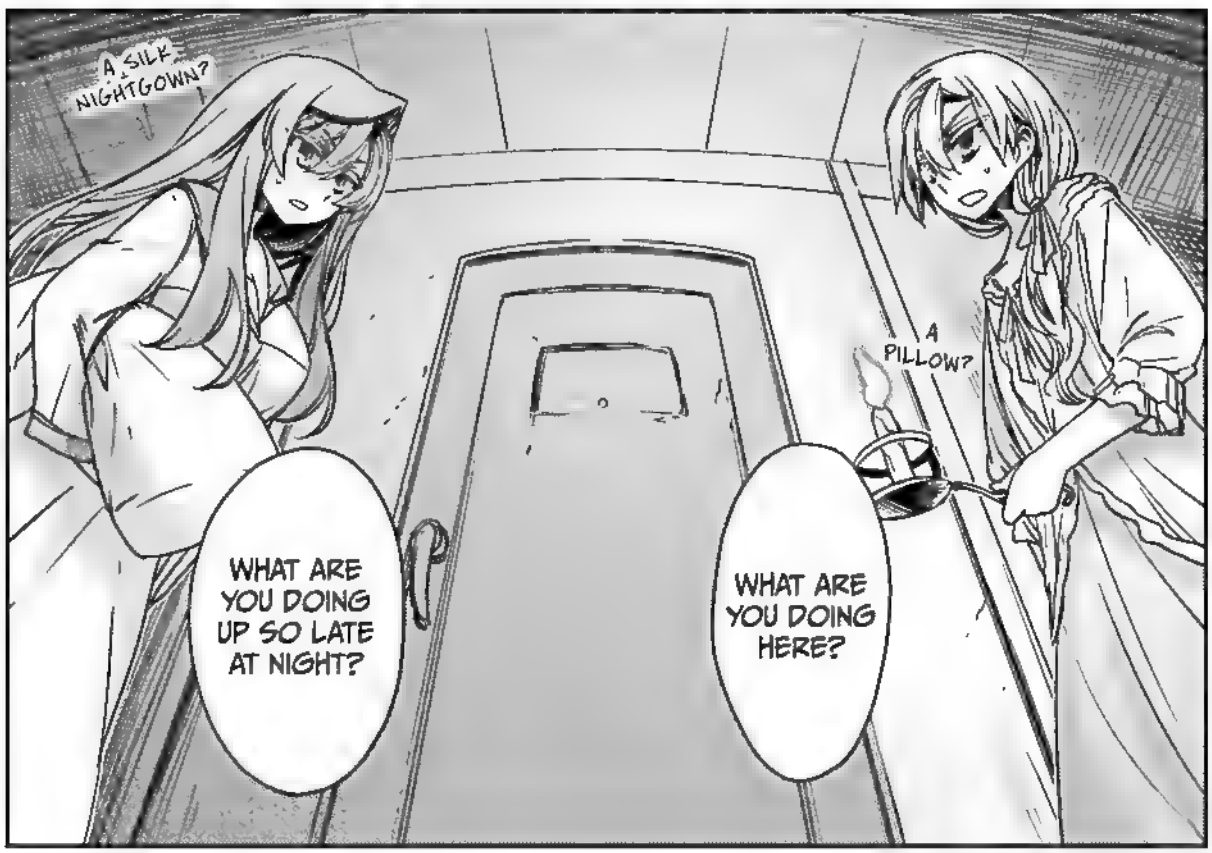
WHEN YOUR ARMY ARRIVED, THE SOUTHERN KINGDOM'S ARMY HAD SURROUNDED THE FORTRESS ON AURORA ISLAND.
THE OUTCOME HAD ALREADY BEEN DETERMINED.
YOU RETREATED IN THE FACE OF VIOLENT REBELLION?
IN THAT CASE, WHY DID NEARLY ALL ARMIES OF THE HOLY KEY EXPEDITIONARY FORCE RETURN TO THE HUMAN WORLD UNSCATHED?

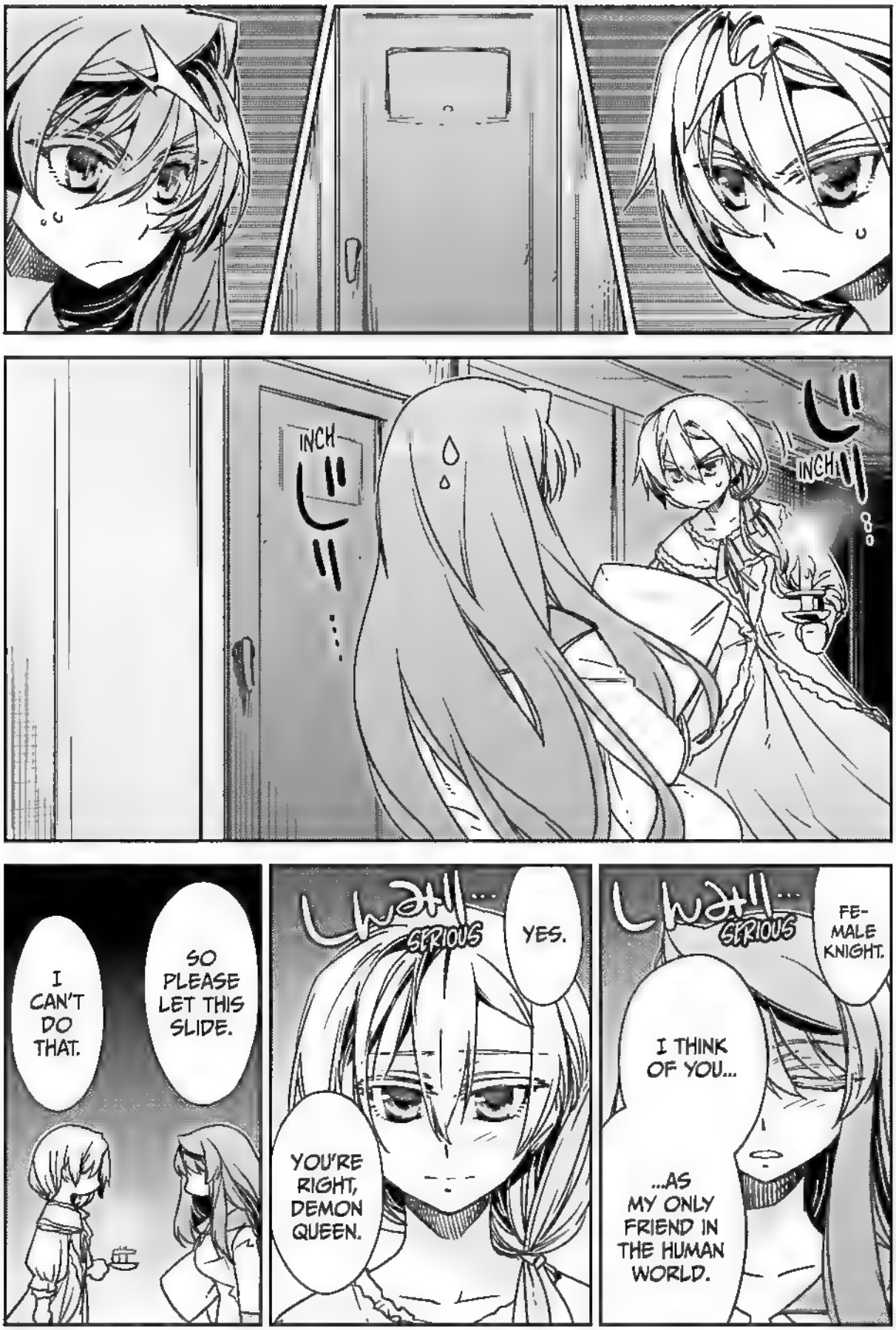
YOU ABANDONED YOUR DUTIES, FLED HOME WITH YOUR ARMIES, AND LOST SOLDIERS TO TRICKS.
YOU ARE GUILTY OF ALLOWING GATEWAY CITY TO FALL AND LOSING OFFICERS AND MEN.
I SENTENCE THE COMMANDER TO CRUCIFIXION!
WHACK

CHAPTER 12 Archenemy and Hero
What Cannot be Defined by Profits and Losses



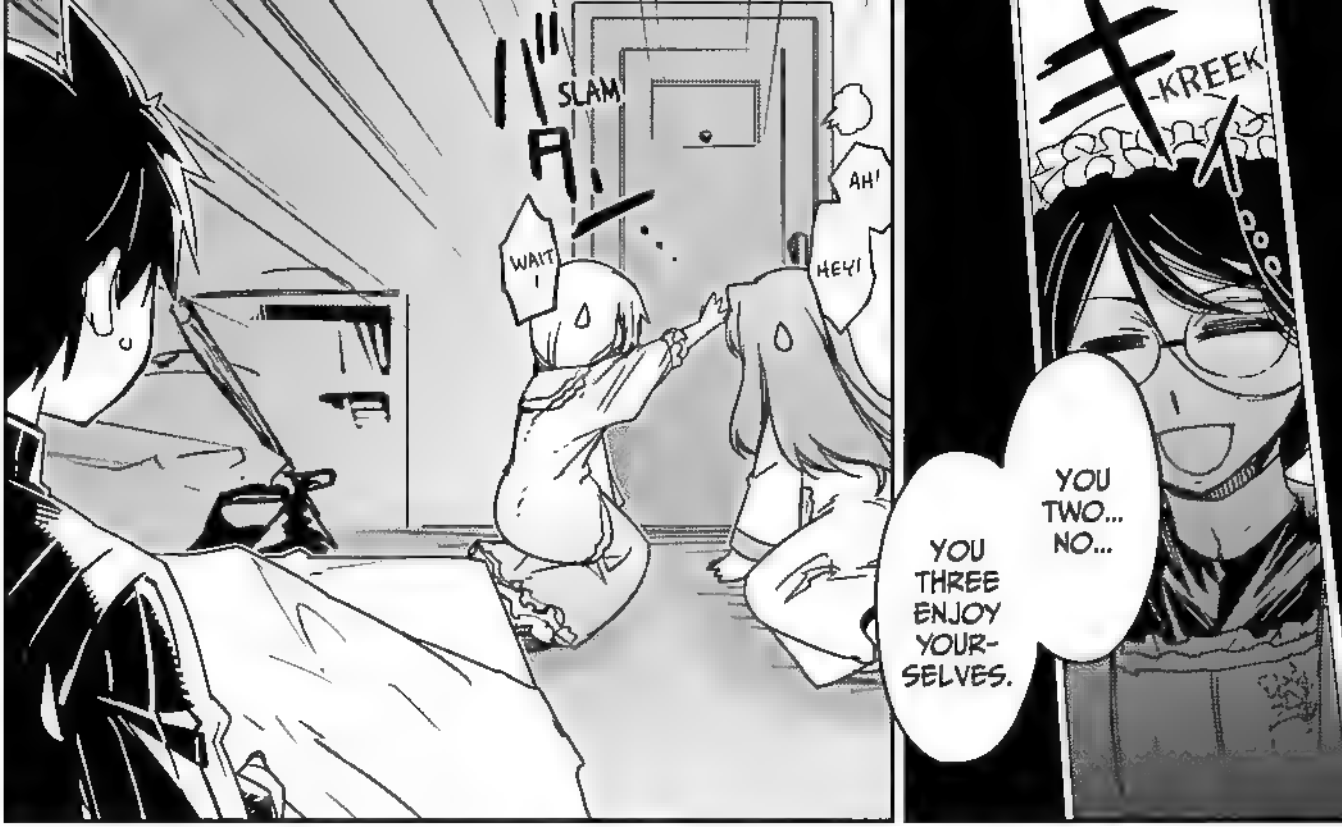
ばったり
BUMP


A SILK NIGHTGOWN?
A PILLOW?
WHAT ARE YOU DOING UP SO LATE AT NIGHT?
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?


INCH
INCH
FE-MALE KNIGHT.
I THINK OF YOU...
...AS MY ONLY FRIEND IN THE HUMAN WORLD.
Uwah!... SERIOUS
YES.
YOU'RE RIGHT, DEMON QUEEN.
SO PLEASE LET THIS SLIDE.
I CAN'T DO THAT.

THAT'S RIGHT. APPARENTLY THERE'S A WOMAN IN THE SPIRIT WORLD MAKING ADVANCES ON THE HERO.
COULD IT BE?
HUH?
WHAT?
THIS IS A WOMAN'S HANDKERCHIEF.
"I PLEDGE MY ETERNAL DEVOTION TO MY DARLING"?
THURST
LOOK AT THIS!
WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?
I ONLY HAVE A FEW MORE DAYS REMAINING TO...
BURN
ANYWAY, THAT'S THAT.
I CANNOT WITHDRAW TONIGHT.
MY SWORD THIRSTS FOR BLOOD!
CLINK
....
SHOUT
SCREAM
OH.
NEVER MIND. IT'S NOTHING.
REMAINING?

ALLOW ME.
NO, I MUST!
I MUST DO THIS!
A LADY MUST SPOIL A GENTLEMAN WITH A TOLERANT AND OPEN MIND.
YOU MEAN TO TEND TO HIM DURING THE NIGHT, DON'T YOU? IT IS UNLADYLIKE TO ARGUE OVER THIS.
WHAT?
PERHAPS YOU'RE RIGHT.
BUT THAT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH WHO SHOULD GO!
IN THAT CASE...
GRAB
...INSTEAD OF CREATING A RUCKUS IN THE HALLWAY, HURRY UP AND GO INSIDE.
Hey!
TOSS
TOSS
Ah!


SLAM
WAIT!
AH!
HEY!
-KREEK
YOU THREE ENJOY YOUR-SELVES.
YOU TWO... NO...

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
UMM...
YOU WERE BEING SO LOUD. I KNEW YOU WERE THERE.

GASP

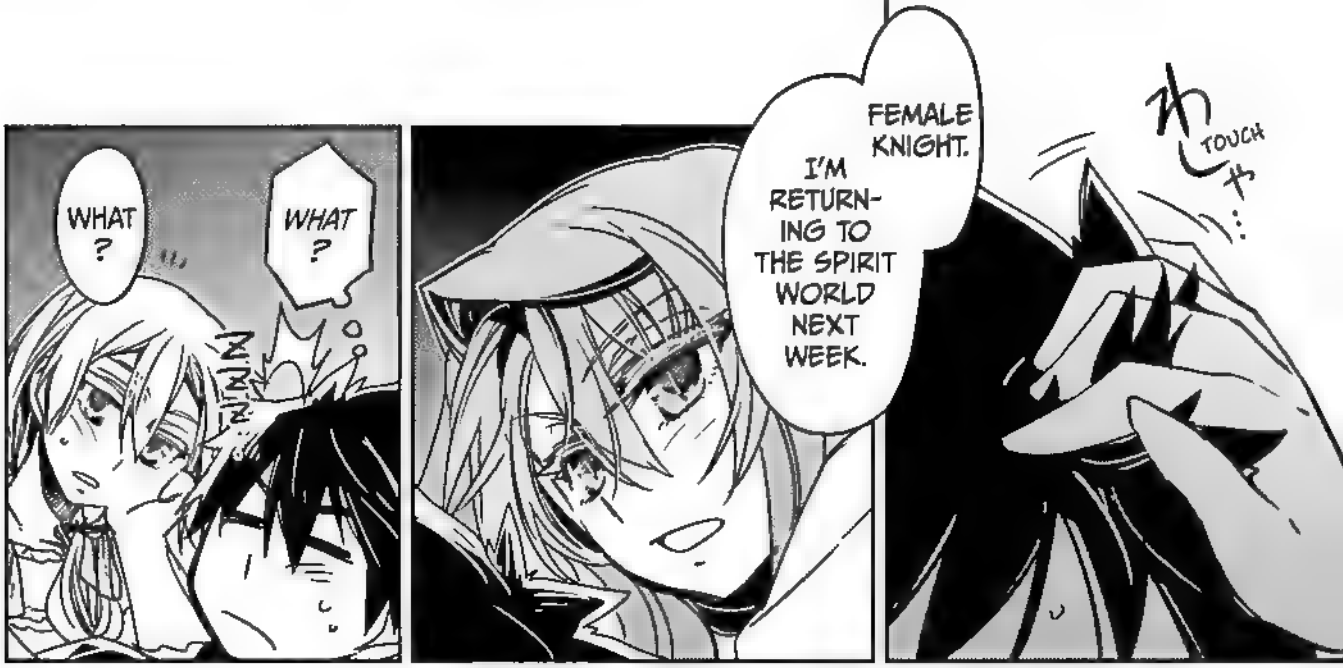
.....
I SHOULD DO IT!
BUT THEN I
NO, NO

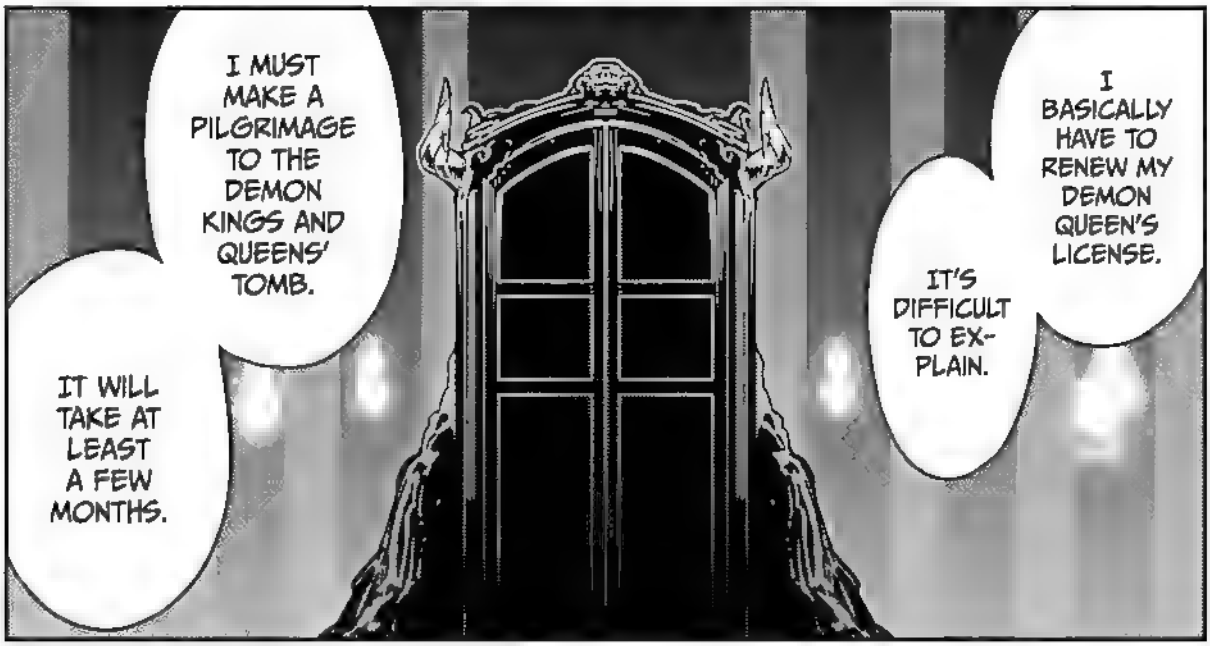
HERO!
WE NEED A TIME OUT!
WE NEED TO HOLD A STRATEGY MEETING!
OKAY.

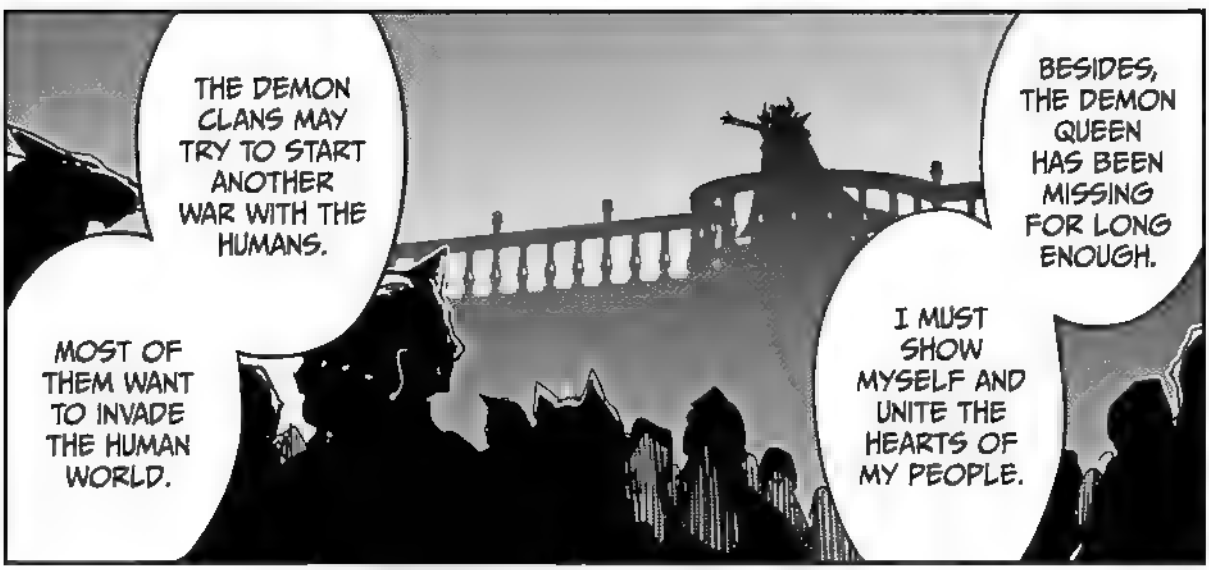
....
SO, ANY-WAY...
HMM?
WHAT IS IT?
WHAT IS THIS SITUA-TION?
THIS ISN'T WHAT I WANT, EITHER.
HOWEVER, WHEN YOU HAVE ONLY ONE LOAF OF BREAD, YOU MUST BE GRATEFUL TO RECEIVE HALF.
THAT'S WHAT MY GRAND-MOTHER USED TO SAY.
NEGOTIA-TIONS ARE A EUPHEMISM FOR COM-PROMISE.
THIS IS AN IMAGE OF THAT SAD REALITY.

UGH.
HOW DID THIS HAPPEN?
DON'T TELL ME YOU PREFER WHAT'S-HER-NAME FIRE DRAGON!
RUB
RUB
DO YOU ONLY LIKE WOMEN WITH LARGE BREASTS?
A MAIDEN'S GREATEST QUALITY IS HER PURITY!
WOMEN WHO HAVE OFFERED THEIR CHASTITY TO THE GODS ARE OBVIOUSLY BETTER!
YOU'RE DISSATISFIED WITH HAVING A WOMAN ON EACH ARM?
SKWEEZE
ARE YOU UNHAPPY BECAUSE I'M SQUISHY?
BECAUSE I'M FLABBY?
YOU BELONG TO ME! HERO!

SCREAM
SHRIEK
ARE YOU ASLEEP?
SNORE
SNORE
HMM?
HERO?
HOW COULD I SLEEP?
IF THERE'S A VIRGIN WHO COULD SLEEP THROUGH THIS SITUATION, I'LL KILL HIM WITH MY SWORD!
SNORE
SNORE
PET
THE HERO'S HAIR IS SO FLUFFY.
I ENJOY TOUCHING HIS HAIR.
TOUCH
TOUCH
PET
PET
YEAH.
HE'S LIKE A BIG DOG.


WHAT?
WHAT?
MUTTER
FEMALE KNIGHT.
I'M RETURNING TO THE SPIRIT WORLD NEXT WEEK.
TOUCH


I MUST MAKE A PILGRIMAGE TO THE DEMON KINGS AND QUEENS' TOMB.
IT WILL TAKE AT LEAST A FEW MONTHS.
I BASICALLY HAVE TO RENEW MY DEMON QUEEN'S LICENSE.
IT'S DIFFICULT TO EXPLAIN.

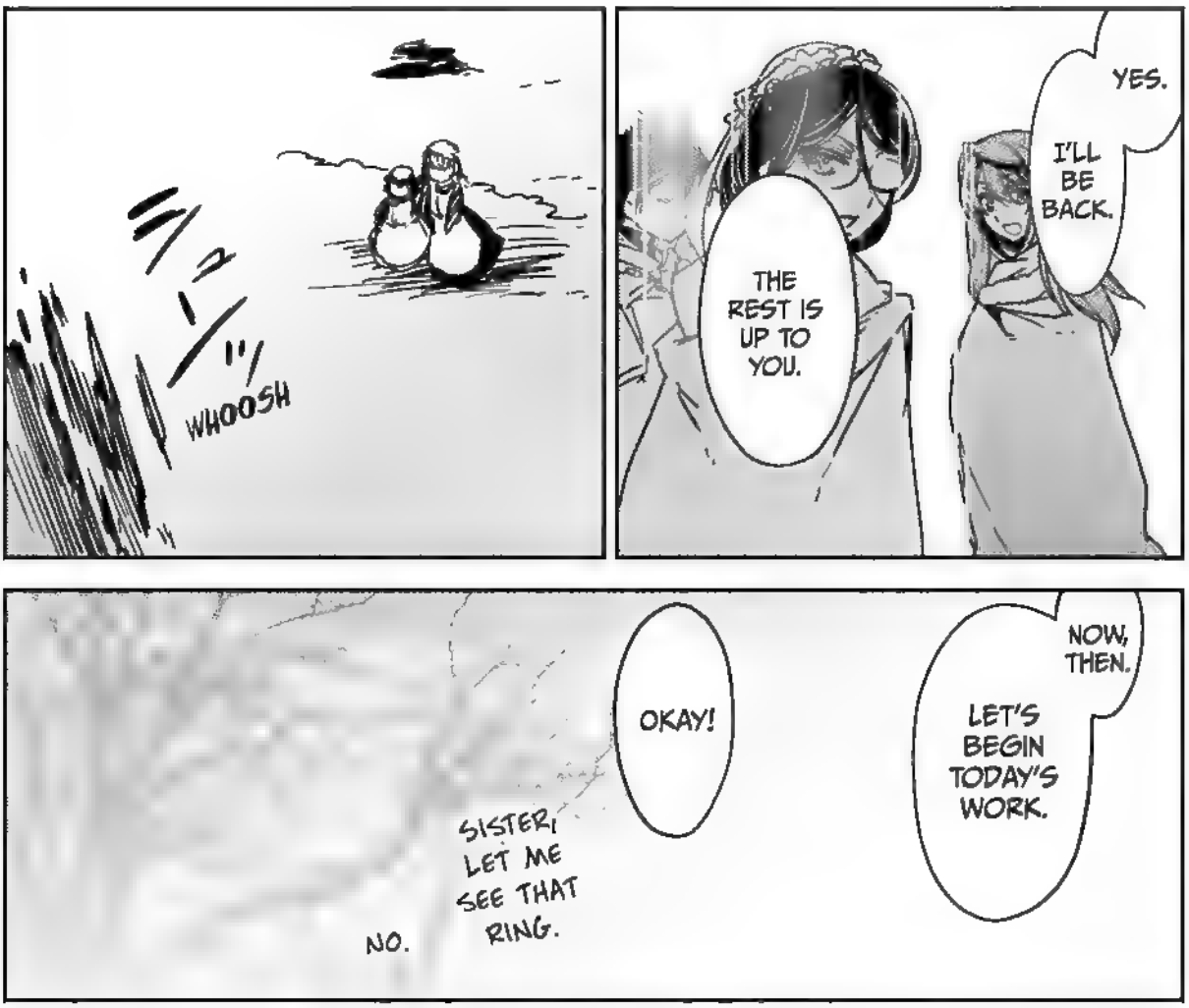

THE DEMON CLANS MAY TRY TO START ANOTHER WAR WITH THE HUMANS.
MOST OF THEM WANT TO INVADE THE HUMAN WORLD.
BESIDES, THE DEMON QUEEN HAS BEEN MISSING FOR LONG ENOUGH.
I MUST SHOW MYSELF AND UNITE THE HEARTS OF MY PEOPLE.

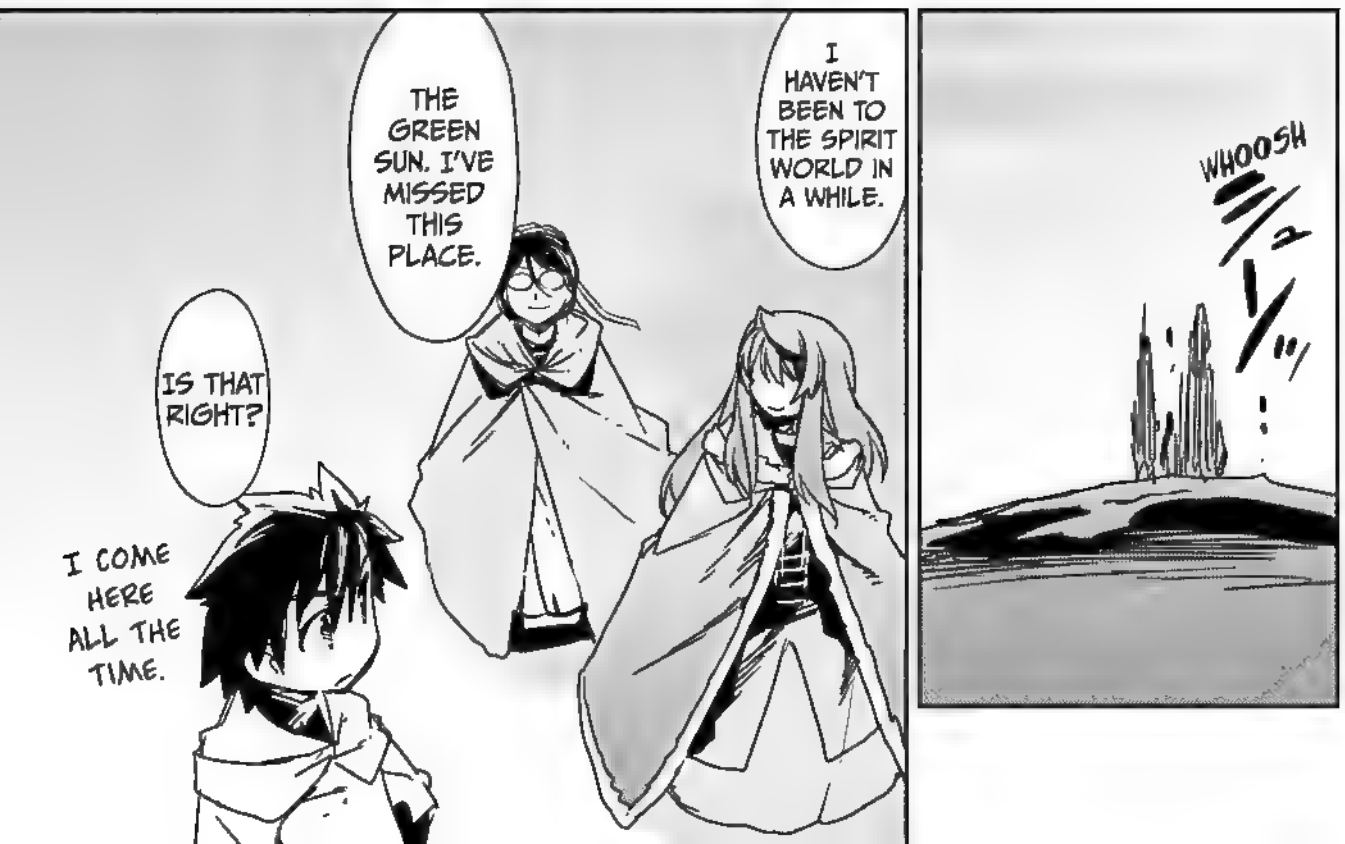
THE SPIRIT WORLD'S TOMB IS KNOWN AS THE PALACE OF THE UNDER-WORLD.
ONLY I CAN ENTER THAT PLACE.
THANK YOU, BUT I'LL BE ALL RIGHT.
I'LL TAKE THE CHIEF MAID WITH ME.
WON'T IT BE DANGEROUS? YOU SHOULD TAKE ME WITH YOU.
ME TOO.
....
IS THAT RIGHT?
SKWEEZE
THAT'S WHY I WANTED SOME OF THE HERO'S BODY WARMTH.
NO, IT'S FINE.
I'LL HAVE TO LEAVE MANY THINGS UNDONE HERE.
I'M SORRY TO ASK YOU TO HANDLE THEM, FEMALE KNIGHT.

UNDER-STOOD.
I SWEAR ON MY SWORD I WILL FULFILL YOUR REQUEST.
I'LL INSTRUCT THE OLDER MAID SISTER IN THE DETAILS OF THE MAN-SION...
...BUT I HOPE YOU'LL LOOK AFTER THE HERO.
I DON'T GET IT.
I UNDER-STAND.
NOW, THEN.
DO YOU GET THE PICTURE?

O-OKAY!
DON'T EXTEND YOUR WORDS
OH-KAY!
YOU SHOULD LISTEN TO YOUR OLDER SISTER...
...AND DO WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO EVERY DAY.
OLDER SISTER MAID.
YOU CAN HOLD ONTO THIS.
A RING?
CLINK
YES, MA'AM.
PUT IT ON AND SAY THE WORD.
YOU'LL UNDERSTAND WHEN YOU USE IT.
SHINE
WHOA.

I LOOK LIKE YOU, MISTRESS.
MY BREASTS...
WOW.
GOOD. WELL DONE.
HUH.
THIS IS...
Y-YES, MA'AM.
I'LL DO MY BEST.
IF YOU EVER NEED TO...
...YOU CAN LOOK LIKE ME.
SEE YOU LATER.
WE'LL PRAY FOR YOUR SAFE RETURN.
SEE YOU LATER.
HISS
WOW.
YES.
I'M READY.
TIE


WHOOSH
THE REST IS UP TO YOU.
YES. I'LL BE BACK.
NOW, THEN. LET'S BEGIN TODAY'S WORK.
OKAY!
SISTER, LET ME SEE THAT RING.
NO.

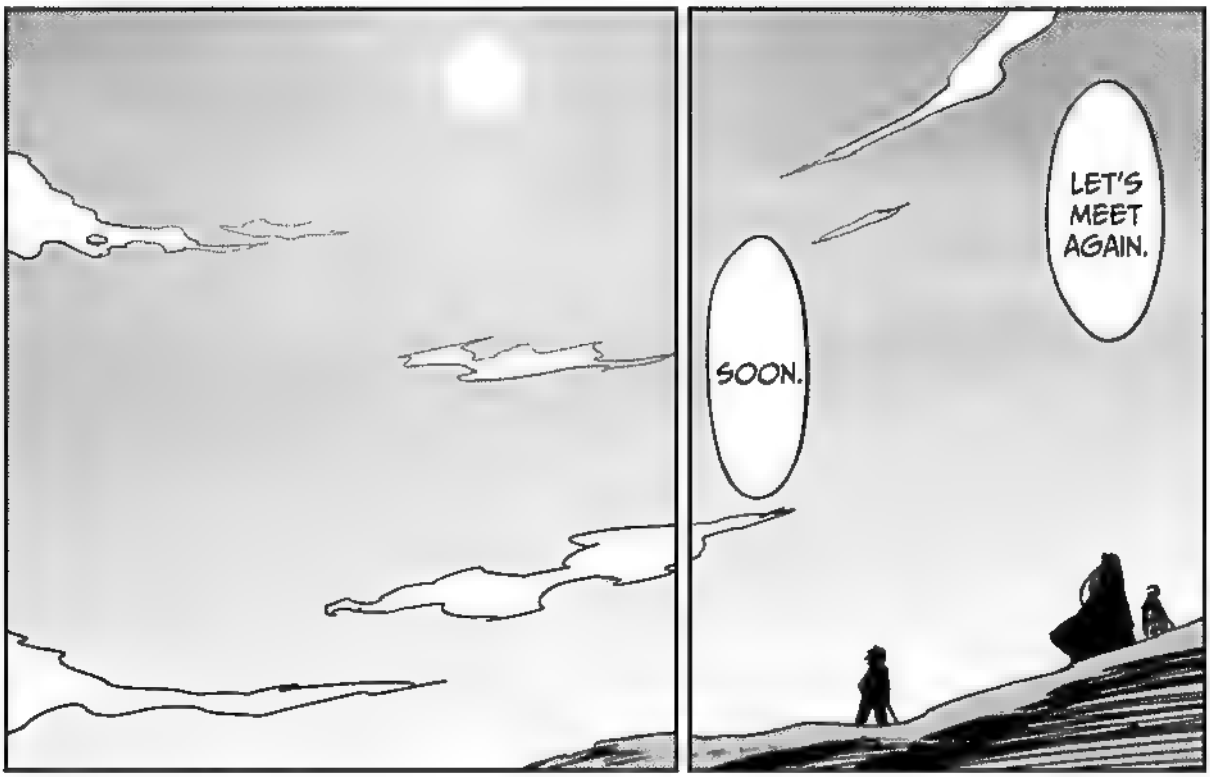

I HAVEN'T BEEN TO THE SPIRIT WORLD IN A WHILE.
THE GREEN SUN. I'VE MISSED THIS PLACE.
IS THAT RIGHT?
I COME HERE ALL THE TIME.
WHOOSH

IT'S A SHORT WALK TO GATEWAY CITY.
HERE IS FINE, RIGHT?
YES.
I WANT TO SEE FOR MYSELF THE CITY WHERE HUMANS AND DEMONS FIRST BEGAN TO COEXIST.
IN THAT CASE, I'LL SHOW YOU AROUND.
NO...
NO, YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO THAT!
IN THAT CITY...
?
HA HA HA
THANK YOU.
TAKE THIS.
HEY, HERO!
YEAH?

LET ME TOUCH YOUR HAIR!
GRAB
WHAT?
MY! MY!
TOUCH
FLUFF
TOUCH
FLUFF

ALL RIGHT! I'M FINISHED REFUELING!
SMOOTH
SMOOTH
PANT
PANT
RIGHT NOW I FEEL LIKE I COULD TAKE ON ALL THE PAST GENERATIONS OF RULERS AT ONCE!

I'VE FINALLY COME THIS FAR.
I CAN ALREADY SEE THE TOP OF THE HILL.
GATEWAY CITY FEELS LIKE A BRIGHT PLACE.
IT'S THE CITY WHERE HUMANS AND DEMONS LIVE TOGETHER.
DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME.
WILL YOU BE OKAY?
OKAY.
SEE YOU LATER, MY DEMON QUEEN.
SO I'M OFF, MY HERO.

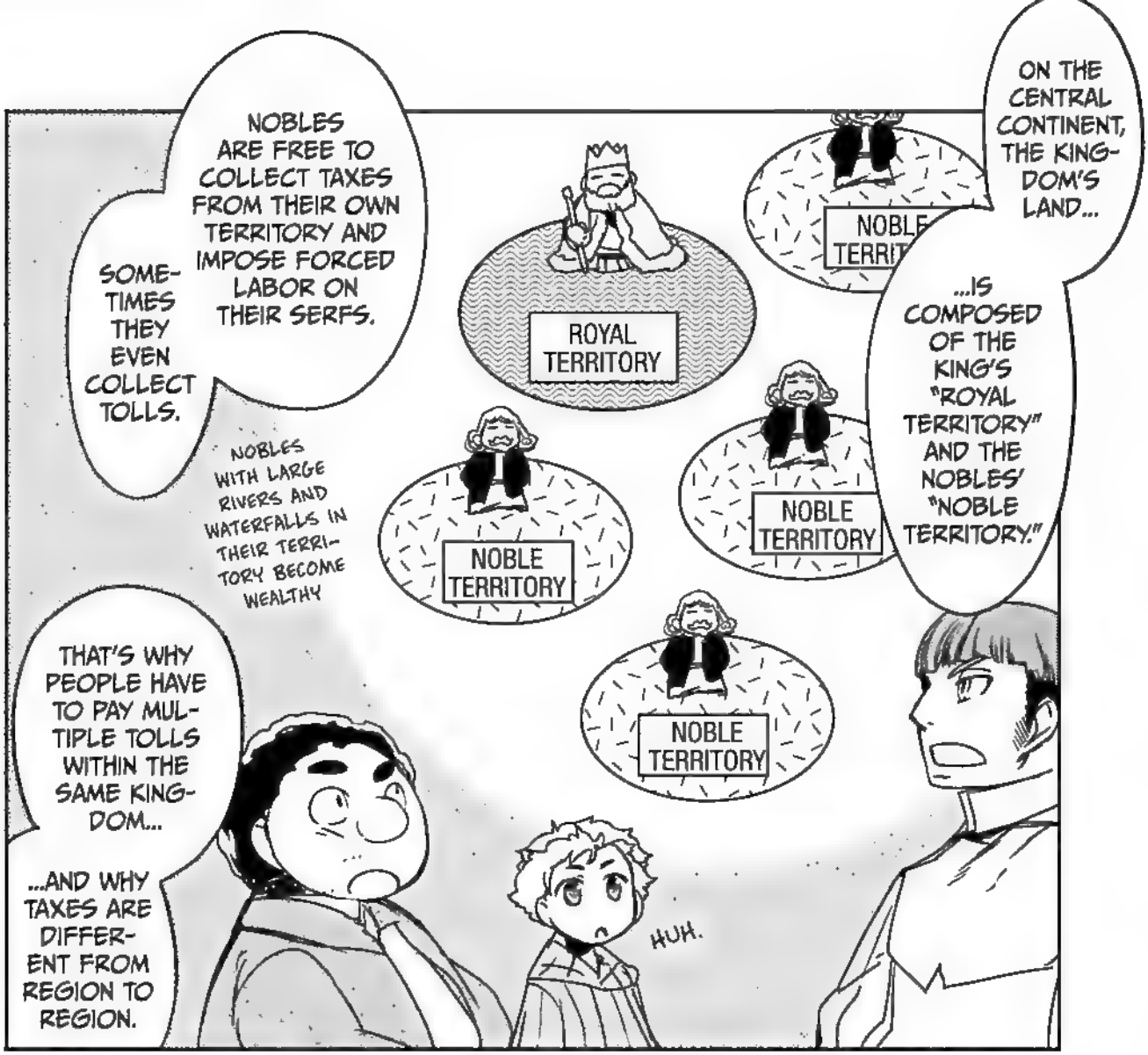

LET'S MEET AGAIN.
SOON.

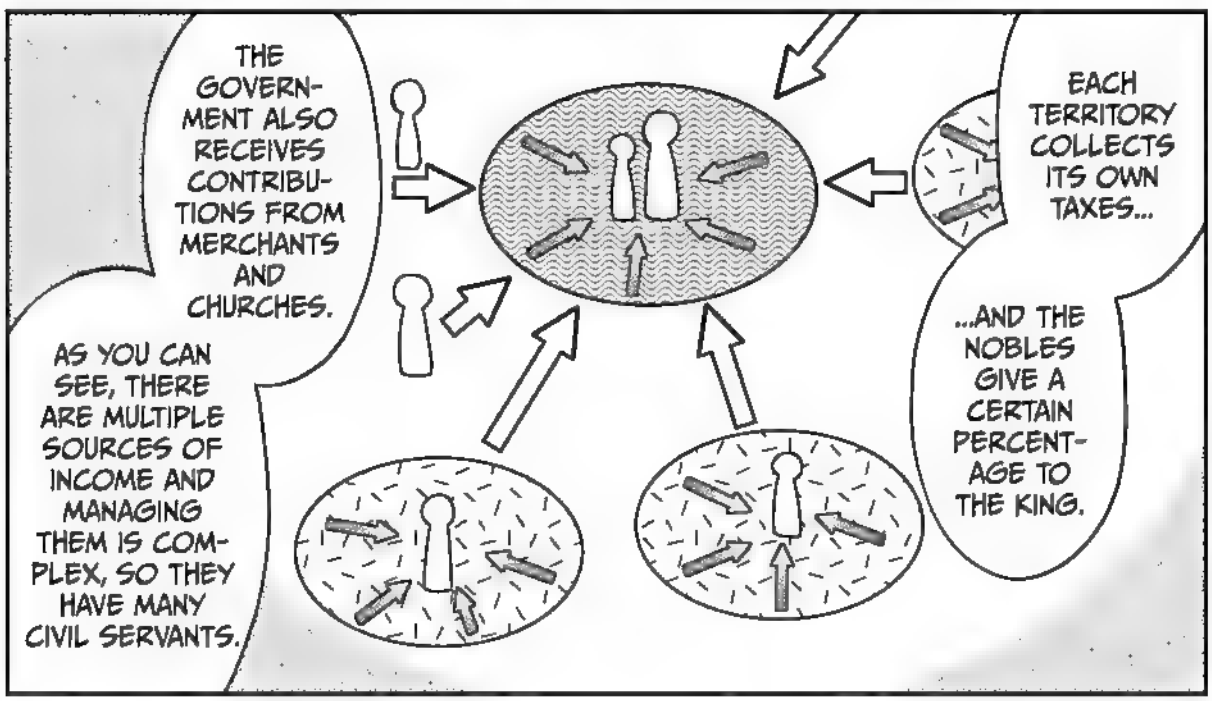
WAAAH...
チャッ SCRITCH
チャッ SCRITCH
チャッ SCRITCH
DON'T STOP WORKING! KEEP ORGANIZ-ING!

WINTER KINGDOM ROYAL PALACE BUDGET COMPILING ROOM

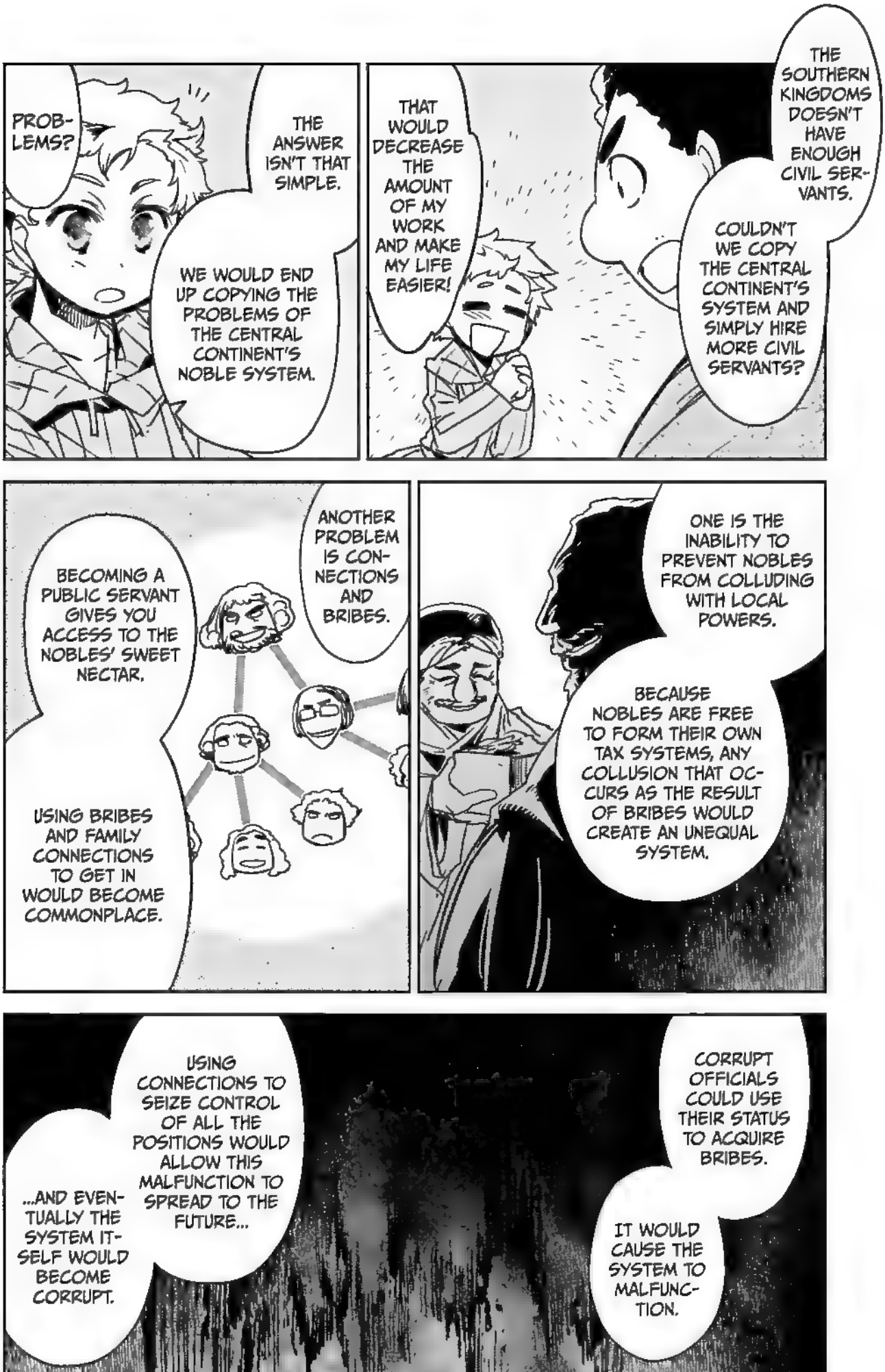
SCRITCH
SCRITCH
YOUNG BOYS LIKE YOURSELF...
DON'T SAY THAT!
TAKE THESE TOO.
...ARE MORE POPULAR WHEN THEY'RE CLOSE TO TEARS.
MY EYES WON'T STOP BLINKING.
WAAAH...
SERVANT
MESS
WHIMPER
WHAT
KLICK
EXCUSE ME. THESE DOCUMENTS...
I CAN ONLY BELIEVE THE PEOPLE OF THIS KINGDOM HAD NO INTENTION OF MANAGING THEIR NATION!
FUME
THE AMOUNT OF PAPERWORK HAS DROPPED BY 80 PERCENT SINCE YOU ARRIVED, MERCHANT'S SON!
WAAAH
IT'S NO WONDER YOU'RE THE SCHOLAR'S APPRENTICE!
GULP
THIS IS INCREDIBLE.

WE ONLY BECAME THIS BUSY RECENTLY.
THE TRADE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE THREE KINGDOMS AND RECLAMATION OF AURORA ISLAND CAUSED A SPIKE IN MERCHANTS AND IMMIGRANTS.
I SEE.
DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEAS HOW TO SOLVE THAT?
IDEAS?
"DON'T THINK ABOUT THE PROBLEM. THINK ABOUT SOLUTIONS."
THAT'S WHAT MY TEACHER TAUGHT ME.
COULD YOU TELL ME MORE?
VERY WELL.
WHERE SHOULD I START?
BUT WHY?
THE SOUTHERN KINGDOMS HAVE FEWER CIVIL SERVANTS COMPARED TO THE CENTRAL CONTINENT.
THE NOBLES HAVE NO TERRITORY IN THE SOUTHERN KINGDOMS.
WHEW
WHAT?


ON THE CENTRAL CONTINENT, THE KINGDOM'S LAND...
...IS COMPOSED OF THE KING'S "ROYAL TERRITORY" AND THE NOBLES' "NOBLE TERRITORY."
ROYAL TERRITORY
NOBLE TERRITORY
NOBLE TERRITORY
NOBLE TERRITORY
NOBLE TERRITORY
NOBLES WITH LARGE RIVERS AND WATERFALLS IN THEIR TERRITORY BECOME WEALTHY
NOBLES ARE FREE TO COLLECT TAXES FROM THEIR OWN TERRITORY AND IMPOSE FORCED LABOR ON THEIR SERFS.
SOMETIMES THEY EVEN COLLECT TOLLS.
THAT'S WHY PEOPLE HAVE TO PAY MULTIPLE TOLLS WITHIN THE SAME KINGDOM...
...AND WHY TAXES ARE DIFFERENT FROM REGION TO REGION.
HUH.


EACH TERRITORY COLLECTS ITS OWN TAXES...
...AND THE NOBLES GIVE A CERTAIN PERCENTAGE TO THE KING.
THE GOVERNMENT ALSO RECEIVES CONTRIBUTIONS FROM MERCHANTS AND CHURCHES.
AS YOU CAN SEE, THERE ARE MULTIPLE SOURCES OF INCOME AND MANAGING THEM IS COMPLEX, SO THEY HAVE MANY CIVIL SERVANTS.

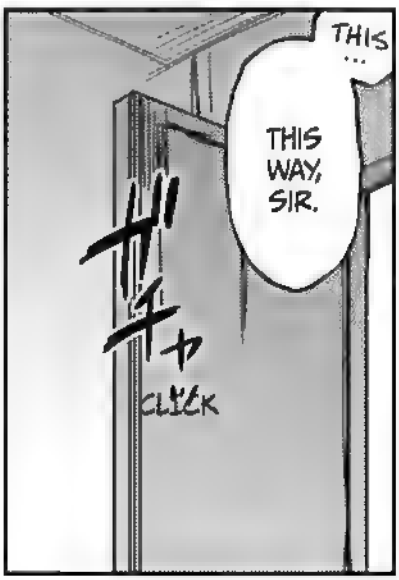
THAT'S WHY THE ONLY SOURCE OF INCOME IS THE ROYAL TERRITORY, AND THE COLLECTION OF TAXES IS SIMPLE.
ROYAL TERRITORY
ON THE OTHER HAND, IN THE SOUTHERN KINGDOMS THE LAND IS INFERTILE AND COVERED IN SNOW THROUGHOUT MOST OF THE YEAR.
THERE ISN'T ENOUGH GOOD LAND TO GRANT TO NOBLES.
IN THE SOUTHERN KINGDOMS, NOBLES REFERS TO THOSE WITH HONORARY TITLES OR POSITIONS WITHIN THE ROYAL COURT.
I HAVE AN HONORARY TITLE TOO!
THAT'S WHY YOU DON'T HAVE ENOUGH CIVIL SERVANTS.
I HOPE MY EXPLANATION HELPS.
IT'S SO DIFFICULT.
THANK YOU. IT'S VERY USEFUL TO KNOW.


PROB-LEMS?
THE ANSWER ISN'T THAT SIMPLE.
WE WOULD END UP COPYING THE PROBLEMS OF THE CENTRAL CONTINENT'S NOBLE SYSTEM.
THAT WOULD DECREASE THE AMOUNT OF MY WORK AND MAKE MY LIFE EASIER!
THE SOUTHERN KINGDOMS DOESN'T HAVE ENOUGH CIVIL SER-VANTS.
COULDN'T WE COPY THE CENTRAL CONTINENT'S SYSTEM AND SIMPLY HIRE MORE CIVIL SERVANTS?
BECOMING A PUBLIC SERVANT GIVES YOU ACCESS TO THE NOBLES' SWEET NECTAR.
ANOTHER PROBLEM IS CON-NECTIONS AND BRIBES.
USING BRIBES AND FAMILY CONNECTIONS TO GET IN WOULD BECOME COMMONPLACE.
ONE IS THE INABILITY TO PREVENT NOBLES FROM COLLUDING WITH LOCAL POWERS.
BECAUSE NOBLES ARE FREE TO FORM THEIR OWN TAX SYSTEMS, ANY COLLUSION THAT OC-CURS AS THE RESULT OF BRIBES WOULD CREATE AN UNEQUAL SYSTEM.
...AND EVEN-TUALLY THE SYSTEM IT-SELF WOULD BECOME CORRUPT.
USING CONNECTIONS TO SEIZE CONTROL OF ALL THE POSITIONS WOULD ALLOW THIS MALFUNCTION TO SPREAD TO THE FUTURE...
IT WOULD CAUSE THE SYSTEM TO MALFUNC-TION.
CORRUPT OFFICIALS COULD USE THEIR STATUS TO ACQUIRE BRIBES.

WHAT ?
THIS IS THE ANSWER.
WE CAN'T LET THAT HAPPEN.
I SEE. NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT, YOU'RE RIGHT.
THERE'S ONLY ONE ANSWER FOR THE SOUTHERN KINGDOM.
...BECAUSE ALL THE IMPORTANT POSITIONS ARE ACQUIRED THROUGH CONNEC-TIONS.
IN THE CENTRAL CONTINENT, TALENT AND MOTIVATION AREN'T ENOUGH TO ACHIEVE SUCCESS...
WE'LL CREATE A NEW SYSTEM FREE OF BRIBES!
...AND REWARD THEIR SKILLS AND MOTIVATION WITH PAY.
WE'LL HIRE OFFICIALS FROM THE COMMON PEOPLE...

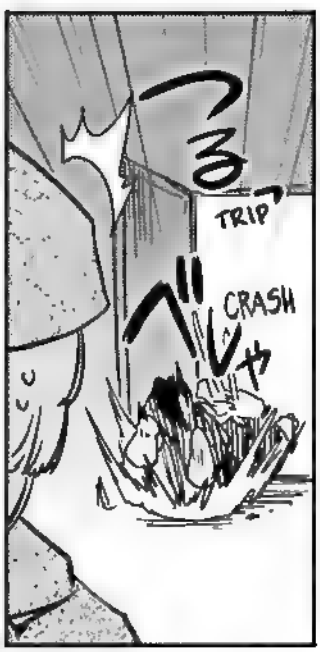
YES...
YES, SIR!
HELLO.
COULD YOU TAKE ME TO THE SCHOLAR?

HA HA HA
THANK YOU.
JERK
JERK
I'LL GO GET MY SISTER...
...I MEAN, I'LL GO GET THE MISTRESS.


THIS...
THIS WAY, SIR.
CLICK

I HAVE NO CHOICE.
I'LL USE THE RING THE MISTRESS GAVE ME.
SISTER, WHAT SHOULD WE DO?
PREPARE SOME TEA.

TEAR


TRIP
CRASH

....
IT'S BEEN A WHILE, SCHOLAR.
SORRY TO KEEP YOU WAITING.
コンコン
KNOCK
KNOCK
ガチャ
CLICK
NO.
BUSINESS IS GOOD AS USUAL.
HOW ARE YOU? HAVE THERE BEEN ANY CHANGES?
KREEK

WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU TODAY?
I HAVE COME TO DELIVER MY REGULAR REPORTS AND DOCUMENTS.
NORMALLY I SEND THEM BY SHIP, BUT I WANTED TO SEE YOUR CHARMING FIGURE AGAIN.
I CAME SO I COULD LOOK UPON YOU.
HOW EMBARRASSING.
はは…
HA HA HA
THAT'S, UM... I'M NOT SURE WHAT TO SAY.
NOW, THEN.

YES, SIR.
THAT'S ENOUGH.
HE'S ALREADY SEEN THROUGH YOU.
CLICK
カチャ
SLAM
YOU'RE AS IMPRESSIVE AS THEY SAY.
I DIDN'T THINK YOU'D SEE THROUGH HER AT A GLANCE.
NO, IT'S JUST THE OPPOSITE. GENERALLY MY INTUITION IS RIGHT IN THESE SITUATIONS.
FLASH

YEAH.
IT'S BEEN FOUR YEARS, HUH?
IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU AGAIN, HERO.
I LISTENED TO SEVERAL OF YOUR SPEECHES PROMOTING THE SPIRIT FOR WAR.
...BUT I'D MUCH RATHER NOT ANTAGONIZE YOU NOW.
WHAT A COINCI-DENCE.
I WAS JUST THINK-ING THE SAME THING.
YOU SEEM TO HAVE CHANGED SOME.
I REMEM-BER YOU SEEMING MORE GUARDED AND PER-FECT...

"MAKING DEALS BY MEDIATING BETWEEN THE IRRECONCIL-ABLE LIGHT AND SHADOWS AND COMPROMIS-ING."
IF I HAVE CHANGED, IT MAY BE BECAUSE OF HER.
THOSE WORDS SERVE TO GUIDE ME IN MY LIFE AS A MERCHANT.
THEY ARE IRRE-PLACE-ABLE.
WHAT?
PAT
I CHOOSE NOW, THEN.
THAT'S RIGHT.
I MUST FULFILL MY PROMISE. ANYTIME IS FINE FOR ME.
FOUR YEARS AGO, DURING ONE OF MY SPEECHES, YOU SAID YOU'D HOST A BANQUET FOR ME WHEN I RETURNED.
WHOOSH

WHOOSH
WHAT
WHAT IS THIS PLACE?
I FEEL UN-STEADY
DIZZY
LOOK AT THE SKY.
IT'S DIS-PLACEMENT SICKNESS.
?
FOR SOME REASON RAINBOWS FORM IN THE SKY AT NIGHT AROUND HERE.
IT'S STRANGE
.....

I DE-CIDED TO BELIEVE YOU WHEN YOU SAID YOU'VE CHANGED.
THAT'S WHY I BROUGHT YOU HERE.
IS THIS PLACE...
YEAH.
IT'S THE SPIRIT WORLD.
SHE'S A DEMON.
IS SHE...
WHAT ARE THOSE WALLS?
I KNEW IT.

WHAT?
THERE'S NO WAY DEMONS WOULD ALLOW HUMANS TO LIVE.
THAT'S A LIE.
THE SEVERAL THOUSAND HUMAN MERCHANTS IN GATEWAY CITY ARE STILL IN BUSINESS.
HE SAID THAT?

ACCORDING TO THE COMMANDER WHO FLED, THE PLACE WHERE INNOCENT PEOPLE ARE BUTCHERED AND DEMONS ARE TRYING TO REGAIN CONTROL?
THAT'S GATEWAY CITY.
UNTIL RECENTLY, IT WAS A HUMAN STRONGHOLD.

....

THEN YOU SHOULD UNDERSTAND...
...WHAT SHE DREAMS OF.
YOU SPOKE WITH HER, DIDN'T YOU?

SHE SAID THERE WERE WORTHY RIVALS IN THE HUMAN WORLD TOO.

SHE SPOKE HIGHLY OF YOU.

WHY DID YOU BRING ME HERE?
WHAT DO YOU WANT ME TO DO?
NO.
HERO, WHAT IS YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH...

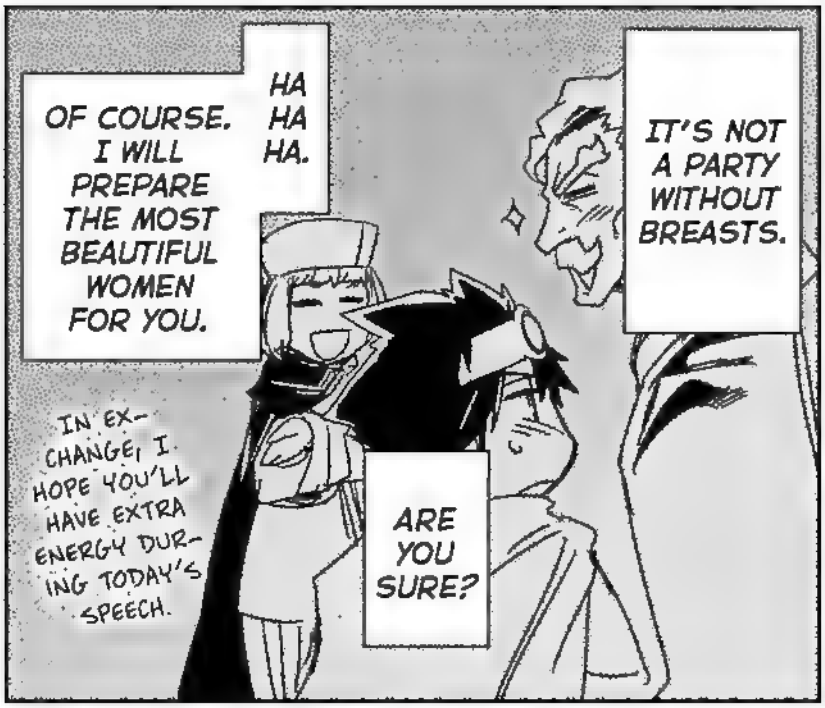
IT'S THE ONLY CITY IN THE WORLD WHERE HUMANS AND DEMONS COEXIST.
THIS IS GATEWAY CITY.
SO I'LL SHOW YOU INSTEAD.

YOU NEVER LET YOUR GUARD DOWN WHEN YOU'RE PLAYING THE MERCHANT.
IT'S AS I EXPECTED.

HONESTLY, I DON'T THINK I STAND A CHANCE TRYING TO NEGOTIATE WITH YOU.
I WAS NEVER VERY GOOD AT THINKING OR TALKING.

WITH YOUR STRENGTH, YOU COULD RETURN THE CITY UNDER HUMAN CONTROL.
MAYBE I COULDI BUT.
THAT WOULD JUST PERPETU-ATE THE EXISTING CYCLE.
IT'S NOT THAT.
HOW CAN I PUT IT?
YEAH.
IT MAKES ME SAD TO REVERT TO JUST A HERO AGAIN.
MY DARLING
WHO IS THAT ?
A DEMON?
COME ON.
YOU OWE ME A PARTY FROM FOUR YEARS AGO.

LET ME SERVE YOU, SIR.
POUR
POUR
POUR
NO, THANK YOU. I'VE ALREADY HAD SO MUCH TO DRINK...
YOU'RE SPILLING!
DRIP
DRIP
IF IT'S NOT SPILLING OVER THE EDGE OF THE CUP...
AH HA HA HA!
...YOU CAN'T CALL IT POURING.
IF YOU COMPLAIN ABOUT THE WAY FIRE DRAGONS POUR, THEY'LL BITE YOUR EAR.
POUR
POUR
BLACK KNIGHT, HAVE SOME.
DRIP
DRIP
WHAT A HORRIFYING PLACE.
GULP
GULP
IT IS THE SPIRIT WORLD.
SO, WHAT DO YOU THINK?
WHISPER
WHISPER
OF WHAT?
?


IT'S NOT A PARTY WITHOUT BREASTS.
HA HA HA.
OF COURSE. I WILL PREPARE THE MOST BEAUTIFUL WOMEN FOR YOU.
IN EXCHANGE, I HOPE YOU'LL HAVE EXTRA ENERGY DURING TODAY'S SPEECH.
ARE YOU SURE?

WHAT?
OF THEIR BREASTS!

あはは HA HA HA
I WAS YOUNG AND CARELESS, BUT...
I SAID THAT. I CERTAINLY DID SAY THAT.
HA HA HA

SO...
...WHAT DO YOU THINK?
GLANCE
ちら

SNICKER
PFFT
WHISPER
I PREFER THE PRINCESS'
BY THE WAY, WHICH DO YOU PREFER?
?
I KNOW, RIGHT?
THEY'RE PRETTY NICE.
あはははは HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA
TWITCH
びく
THE SAKE'S GOOD TOO.
GULP
GULP
IT'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE I LAUGHED THIS MUCH.
はは HA HA
はは HA HA
はは HA HA
はは HA HA

YOU HAVE SHOWN ME AN INCRED-IBLE LAND-SCAPE...
...GIVEN ME GOOD SAKE...
...AND MADE ME LAUGH...
I KNOW.
...BUT I WILL NOT COMPRO-MISE IN OUR NEGOTIA-TIONS.
SHE TOLD ME...
...THE MERCHANTS WANT "PER-MISSION."
YES.
PERMIS-SION TO USE, PERMISSION TO PASS THROUGH, PERMISSION TO TRADE.
NEW LANDS ARE NEW MARKETS AND NEW RE-SOURCES FOR PRODUCTION.

IT IS...
...AN ORCHARD OF TREES WHOSE LIMBS HANG HEAVY WITH GOLDEN FRUIT.
WELL...
WHAT ABOUT THAT CITY?
!
WHAT DO YOU WANT IN EX-CHANGE?
OKAY, SOLD.
MERCHANTS ALWAYS THINK OF EVERY-THING IN TERMS OF PROFITS AND LOSSES, RIGHT?
BUT IF...
...I HAVE TO NAME SOME-THING ...
I'M NOT HER, SO I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S A FAIR PRICE.
I DON'T KNOW HOW TO ANSWER YOUR QUESTION.

EVERYONE TREATS THOSE MERCHANTS LIKE MISERS OR MONSTERS WHO CARE ONLY ABOUT PROFIT...
...BUT WHEN I SEE HER, I THINK MAYBE THAT'S NOT TRUE.
MERCHANTS WHO ARE SHREWDEST WHEN IT COMES TO PROFITS AND BALANCE PROFITS AND LOSSES BETTER THAN ANYONE...
...JUST MIGHT BE...
...THE FIRST ONES TO DISCOVER...
...SOMETHING THAT CAN'T BE DEFINED BY PROFITS OR LOSSES.
SHOW ME WHAT THAT IS.
THAT'S MY PRICE.

あはは HA HA HA
WHAT IS THIS...
...RIDICULOUS FEELING?
SNICKER...
I THINK WE NEED WHATEVER THING YOU FIND.
はは HA HA HA
I SEEM TO BE IN QUITE A CHEERFUL MOOD.
はは HA HA
OH! HOW DELIGHTFUL!
ROLL
IT WOULD NOT BE LADYLIKE TO INTERFERE IN A CONVERSATION BETWEEN MEN.
LET'S DRINK AND ENJOY THE RAINBOWS TONIGHT.
PRINCESS, DO YOU...
...NOT NEED TO TODAY?
I'M GLAD MY DARLING AND HIS GUEST SEEM TO BE ENJOYING THEMSELVES.
YES.

VERY WELL. I ACCEPT THE TERMS OF THE AGREEMENT.
I WILL ACQUIRE THIS THING AND SHOW IT TO YOU.
PLEASE DO.
WHEN I DO...
...I PROBABLY WON'T SHY AWAY FROM HEARING WHAT YOUR RELATIONSHIP IS WITH HER.

WHAT DID YOU SAY?
I'M NOT FOOLISH ENOUGH TO PICK A FIGHT AT AN INOP-PORTUNE TIME.
WHAT DID YOU SAY?
DID YOU NOT HEAR ME?
ALLOW ME TO REPEAT MYSELF.
WHAT?
CLATTER
THE PERSON KNOWN AS THE CRIMSON SCHOLAR WHO OPENED A SCHOOL IN THE WINTER KINGDOM...
...IS ACCUSED AND SUSPECTED OF HERESY.

THE END

Chapter 12
What Cannot be Defined by Profits and Losses

THE HIERARCHY of NOBLES and its ORIGINS

Nobles were originally warriors. We will now explain the hierarchy and origins of nobles

THE FRANKISH EMPIRE WAS THE BIRTHPLACE OF ARISTOCRACY

In Europe during the Middle Ages, a world similar to that of *Maoyu*, royalty and nobility compose the upper class. Generally speaking, the five ranks of nobles from the top down are duke, marquis, count, viscount, and baron. In many cases, warriors without titles who rode horses later received the title "knight," resulting in six tiers total of nobles. Though the details are unclear, the world of *Maoyu* likely uses a similar system.

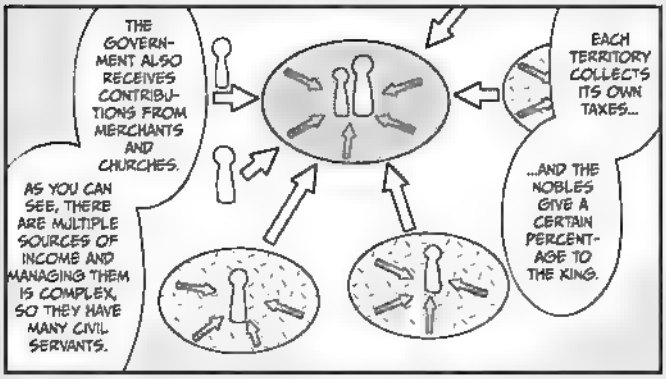
People who accomplish great deeds sometimes received honorary tiles for one generation.

During the 5th to 9th Centuries, government officials of Western Europe's Frankish Empire formed European aristocracy. At the time, members of royalty possessing large territories were dukes, provincial governors ruling the borderlands were margraves, ordinary provincial governors were counts, and other influential members of powerful families were known as barons. The term "marquis" later replaced the title of margrave. The term "viscount" is often used to refer to the sons of nobles, and some regions like Germany don't use the title at all.

The term margrave may conjure images of poor nobles banished to the borderlands, and it may seem strange they rank higher than counts. However, as the lands of the margraves touched the territories of other peoples and borders, they acted as governor-generals protecting the border. Because of this, they possessed larger territories and greater power compared to other provincial governors. In order to protect the borders and prevent rebellion, it was an important job that could only be assigned to competent and trustworthy individuals.

As briefly described in the second episode of this corner (recorded in volume one), warriors who fought against foreign enemies held higher status and served as the origin of the noble class. They received land in exchange for fighting for the king, and though they were the king's subjects, they had a give-and-take relationship.

Though the same can be said of Japan's Warring States Period, one of the reasons a monarch would adopt an expansionary policy would be to secure land with which he could reward his subjects. Especially during the early Middle Ages, the power of kings was not absolute, and they were nothing more than leaders of federations of feudal lords. Because of this, unless the king himself was incredibly charismatic, only land allowed a king to hold onto his subjects. Excluding the taxes nobles paid to kings, in most cases the nobles governing a territory were wholly responsible for its management.


THE GOVERNMENT ALSO RECEIVES CONTRIBUTIONS FROM MERCHANTS AND CHURCHES.
AS YOU CAN SEE, THERE ARE MULTIPLE SOURCES OF INCOME AND MANAGING THEM IS COMPLEX, SO THEY HAVE MANY CIVIL SERVANTS.
EACH TERRITORY COLLECTS ITS OWN TAXES...
...AND THE NOBLES GIVE A CERTAIN PERCENTAGE TO THE KING.

The nobles of the Central Continent who hardly ever go to war stand to make the greatest profit.

Special Appendix

ILLUSTRATION GALLERY

MAOYU : Archenemy and Hero
"Become mine, Hero" "I refuse!"
Volume 3

KADOKAWA MANGA

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MAOYU MAOU YUUSHA
"KONO WARENO MONOTONARE, YUUSHAYO" "KOTOWARU!"
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